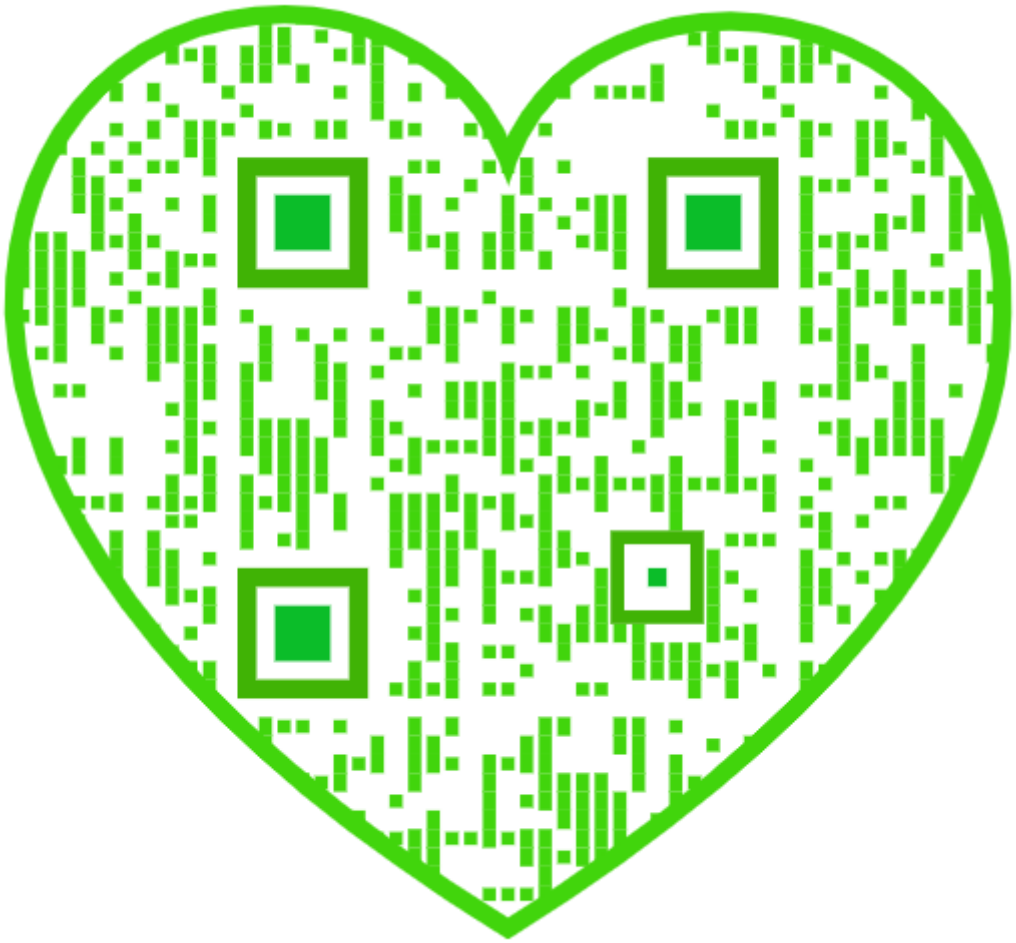

AMERICAN
ARCHITECTURE

Studies

BY

MONTGOMERY SCHUYLER

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

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TO

K. L. S.

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THE POINT OF VIEW

THE connection between the papers here collected, in addition to their common subject-matter, is their common point of view. Of this I do not know that I can make a clearer or briefer statement than I made in a speech delivered, in response to the toast of "Architecture," at the fifth annual banquet of the National Association of Builders, given February 12, 1891, at the Lenox Lyceum, in New York. Accordingly I reprint here the report of my remarks:

"Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen of the National Association of Builders,—You will not expect from me, in responding to this toast, any exhibition of that facetious spirit with which some of my predecessors have entertained you. It has, indeed, been said that American humor has never found full expression except in architecture. It has also been said by an honored friend of mine, himself an architect, whom I hoped to see here to-night, that American architecture was the art of covering one thing with another thing to imitate a third thing, which, if genuine, would not be desirable. But I hope you will agree with me that, though the expression is comic, the fact, so far as it is a fact, is

serious even to sadness. It is a great pleasure and a great privilege for me to speak to this sentiment, and it is especially a privilege for me to speak upon it to an association of builders, because it seems to me that the real, radical defect of modern architecture in general, if not of American architecture in particular, is the estrangement between architecture and building—between the poetry and the prose, so to speak, of the art of building, which can never be disjoined without injury to both. If you look into any dictionary or into any cyclopædia under 'architecture,' you will find that it is the art of building; but I don't think that you would arrive at that definition from an inspection of the streets of any modern city. I think, on the contrary, that if you were to scrape down to the face of the main wall of the buildings of these streets, you would find that you had simply removed all the architecture, and that you had left the buildings as good as ever; that is to say, the buildings in which the definition I have quoted is illustrated are in the minority, and the buildings of which I have just spoken are in the majority; and the more architectural pretensions the building has, the more apt it is to illustrate this defect of which I have spoken.

"It is, I believe, historically true, in the history of the world, with one conspicuous exception, that down to the Italian Renaissance, some four centuries ago, the architect was himself a builder. The exception is the classical period in Rome. The Grecian builders, as all of you know, had taken the simplest possible construction, that of the post and lintel, two uprights carrying a crossbeam, and they had developed that into a refined and beautiful thing. The Romans admired that, and they wished to reproduce it in their own buildings, but the construction of their own buildings was an arched

construction; it was a wall pierced with arches. They did not develop that construction into what it might have been. They simply pierced their wall with arches and overlaid it with an envelope of the artistic expression of another construction, which they coarsened in the process. According to some accounts, they hired Greek decorators to overlay it with this architecture which had nothing to do with it, and there was the first illustration in all history of this difference between the art of architecture and the art of building. In every other country in the world the architect had been the builder. I think that is true down to the Italian Renaissance; and then building was really a lost art. There hadn't been anything really built in the fifteenth century; and they began to employ general artists, painters and sculptors and goldsmiths, to design their buildings, and these men had no models before them except this Grecian-Roman architecture of which I speak.* These men reproduced that in their designs, and left the builder to construct it the best way he could, and that, I am told, is a process which sometimes prevails in the present time. But before that everything had been a simple development of the construction and the material of the building, and since that men have thought they perceived that architecture was one thing and building was another, and they have gone on to design buildings without any sort of reference to the materials of which they were composed, or the manner in which they were put together. That is the origin of the exclusively modern practice of working in architectural

* Of course this needs modification, since the mediæval buildings of Italy were accessible to the designers of the Renaissance. What I suppose I had in mind was to point out that they had no knowledge of the original Grecian monuments, from which the classical Roman architecture was derived.

styles, as it is called. Why, before the fifteenth century, I don't suppose any man who began to build a building ever thought in what style he should compose it any more than I thought before I got up here in what language I should address you; he simply built in the language to which he was accustomed and which he knew. You will find this perfect truth is the great charm of Grecian architecture, and ten or fifteen centuries later it was the great charm of Gothic architecture; that is to say, that it was founded upon fact, that it was the truth, that it was the thing the man was doing that he was concerned about, even in those pieces of architecture which seem to us the most exuberant, the most fantastic, like the front of Rouen, or like the cathedral of which Longfellow speaks, as you all remember:

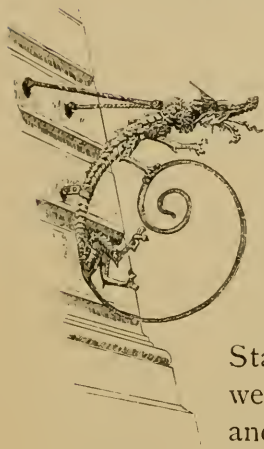
> "'How strange the sculptures that adorn these towers!
> This crowd of statues, in whose folded sleeves
> Birds build their nests; while, canopied with leaves,
> Parvis and portal bloom like trellised bowers,
> And the vast minster seems a cross of flowers.'

Even in those things there was that logical, law-abiding, sensible, practical adherence to the facts of construction, to the art of building, which we have so long lost, and which I hope we are getting back again.

"There are examples, in the work of our modern architecture, of architects who design with this same truth, with this same reality, with this same sincerity that animated the old builders before the coming-in of this artificial and irrelevant system of design, and one of them is the building in which I am informed a great many of you spent last evening; I mean the Casino. I don't know any more admirable illustration of real, genuine, modern architecture than that building; and among all its merits I don't know any merit greater than the

fidelity with which the design follows the facts of structure in the features, in the material, in everything. It is a building in baked clay; there isn't a feature in it in brick or in terra-cotta which could be translated into any other material without loss. It is a beautiful, adequate, modern performance. I say this without any reservation, because unfortunately the genius who, in great part, designed that building has gone from us; and there are many things by living architects, whom I cannot mention because they are living, which exhibit these same merits. There is one other example that I would like to mention here, because many of you know his work; I mean the late John Wellborn Root, of Chicago. I shouldn't mention him either if he hadn't, unfortunately, gone from us. Mr. Root's buildings exhibit the same true sincerity—the knowledge of the material with which he had to do, the fulfilment of the purpose which he had to perform. I don't know any greater loss that could have happened to the architecture of this country and to the architecture of the future than that man dying before his prime. These are stimulating and fruitful examples to the architects of the present time to bring their art more into alliance, more into union, more into identity, with the art of building; and it is by these means, gentlemen, and by these means only, that we can ever gain a living, a progressive, a real architecture—the architecture of the future."

*CONCERNING QUEEN ANNE**



THE new departure is an apt name for what some of its conductors describe as the new "school" in architecture and decoration. It has still, after nearly ten years of almost complete sway among the young architects of England and of the United States, all the signs of a departure—we might say of a hurried departure—and gives no hint of an arrival, or even of a direction. It is, in fact, a general "breaking-up" in building, as the dispersion of Babel was in speech, and we can only and somewhat desperately hope that the utterances of every man upon whom a dialect has suddenly fallen may at least be intelligible to himself. From a "movement" so exclusively centrifugal that it assumes rather the character of an explosion than of an evolution, not much achievement can be looked for. In fact, the "movement" has not, thus far, either in England or in the United States, produced a monument which anybody but its author would venture to pronounce very good. Not to go back to the times when Gothic architecture was vernacular in England, it has produced nothing which can be put in competition with

* "Recent Building in New York," 1883.

the works either of the English classical revival, or with the works of the English Gothic revival—with St. Paul's and the Radcliffe Library, on the one hand, or with Westminster Palace and the Manchester Town-hall, on the other. Before the "movement" began, the architects of Europe and America were divided into two camps. They professed themselves either Renaissance or Gothic architects. The mediævalists acknowledged a subjection to certain principles of design. The classicists accepted certain forms and formulæ as efficacious and final. They were both, therefore, under some restraint. But the new movement seems to mean that aspiring genius shall not be fettered by mechanical laws or academic rules, by reason or by revelation, but that every architect shall build what is right in his own eyes, even if analysis finds it absurd and Vitruvius condemns it as incorrect.

"Queen Anne" is a comprehensive name which has been made to cover a multitude of incongruities, including, indeed, the bulk of recent work which otherwise defies classification, and there is a convenient vagueness about the term which fits it for that use. But it is rather noteworthy that the effect of what is most specifically known as Queen Anne is to restrain the exuberances of design. Whoever recalls Viollet-le-Duc's pregnant saying, that "only primitive sources supply the energy for a long career," would scarcely select the reign of Queen Anne out of all English history for a point of departure in the history of any one of the plastic arts. The bloated Renaissance of Wren's successors, such as is shown in Queen's College and in Aldrich's church architecture in Oxford, was its distinctive attainment in architecture. The minute and ingenious wood-carving of Grinling Gibbons was its distinctive attainment in decoration. Nothing could show more forci-

bly the degeneracy of art at the period which of late years has been represented as an æsthetic renascence than the acceptance of these wood-carvings, which in execution and all technical qualities are as complete, and in design and all imaginative qualities are as trivial and commonplace, as contemporary Italian sculpture, as works of art comparable to the graceful inventions of Jean Goujon, and clearly preferable to the sometimes rude but always purposeful decoration of mediæval churches.

The revivalists of Queen Anne have not confined their attentions to the reign of that sovereign. They have searched the Jacobean and the Georgian periods as well, and have sucked the dregs of the whole English Renaissance. Unhappily, nowhere in Europe was the Renaissance so unproductive as in the British Islands. It was so unproductive, indeed, that Continental historians of architecture have scarcely taken the trouble to look it up or to refer to it at all. Not merely since the beginning of the Gothic revival, but since the beginning of the Greek revival that was stimulated by the publication of Stuart's work on Athens, in which for the first time uncorrupted Greek types could be studied, what contemporary architects have ransacked as a treasury was considered a mere lumber-room, and fell not so much into disesteem as into oblivion. During two generations nobody any more thought of studying the works of English architecture from Hawksmoor to "Capability" Brown, than anybody thought of studying the poetry of Blackmore and Hayley. The attempt within the past ten years to raise to the rank of inspirations the relics of this decadence, which for years had been regarded by everybody as rather ugly and ridiculous, is one of the strangest episodes in the strange history of modern architecture.

Mr. Norman Shaw has been the chief evangelist of this strange revival. Mr. Shaw is a very clever designer, with a special felicity in piquant and picturesque groupings, which he had shown in Gothic work, especially in country-houses, before the caprice seized him of uniting free composition with classic detail, and the attempt at this union is what is most distinctively known as Queen Anne. Whoever considers the elements of this combination would hardly hope that the result could be a chemical union, or more than a mechanical mixture. Classic detail is the outcome and accompaniment of the simplest construction possible, which was employed by the Greek architects in the simplest combination possible, and precisely because it was so simple and so primitive they were enabled to reduce it to an "order," and to carry it to a pitch of purity, lucidity, and refinement to which the most enthusiastic mediævalist will scarcely maintain that more complicated constructions have ever attained. But this very perfection, which was only attainable when life was simple and the world was young, this necessary relation between the construction and the detail of Greek Doric, makes it forever impossible that Greek detail should be successfully "adapted" to modern buildings. A late writer on the theory of architecture has said of Greek architecture: "As partisans of its historical glory, we should desire that it remain forever in its historical shrine." We laugh at the men of two generations ago who covered Europe and America with private and public buildings in reproduction as exact as they could contrive of Grecian temples. But, after all, if the Greek temple be the ultimate, consummate flower, not only of all actual but of all possible architectural art, were not these men wiser in their generation than their successors who have taken the Greek temple to pieces and tried to construct mod-

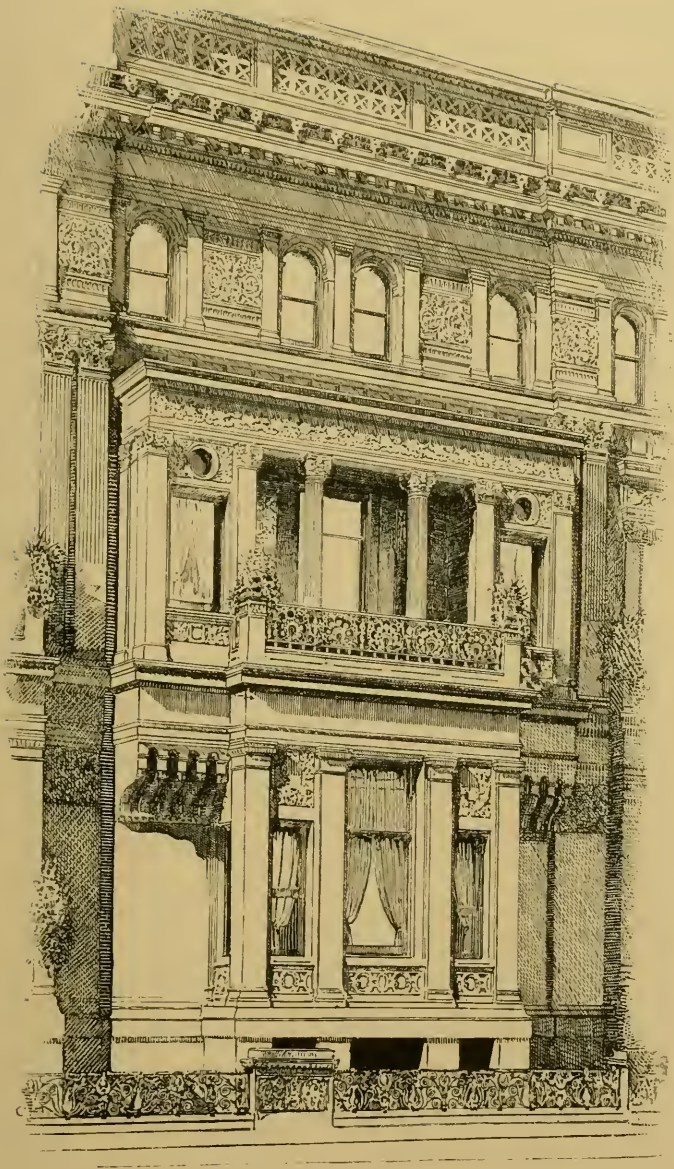
ern buildings out of its fragments? There is even something touching and admirable, in this view, in the readiness and completeness of the sacrifice to beauty which the reproducers of the Greek temples made of all their merely material comforts and conveniences, something that we miss in the adapters. The Romans can scarcely be said to have attempted this adaptation. They built Roman buildings for purposes and by methods which had never entered the minds of Greek architects to conceive, and they built them with no more thought of art than enters the mind of a modern railway engineer in designing a truss bridge. After they were designed according to their requirements it was that the Roman engineer overlaid them with an irrelevant trellis of Greek architecture, debasing and corrupting the Greek architecture in the process. And it is this hybrid architecture, which analysis would at once have dissolved into its component parts, that was accepted without analysis as the starting-point of "the new departure" of the fifteenth century, and the ultimate English debasement of which in the eighteenth is taken by the contemporary architects of England and America as the starting-point of the new departure in the nineteenth. It cannot be said that Mr. Norman Shaw and his followers have succeeded in the task of combining free composition with classic detail, which the Romans forbore to attempt, and in which the French architects of the sixteenth century failed. Every attempt to fit antique detail to a building faithfully designed to meet modern requirements shows that it cannot be so fitted without being transformed, and—since the sole excuse for the attempt is that it cannot be bettered — without being debased. What the Queen Anne men have done is virtually what the Romans did. They have shirked the impossible problem they unnecessarily imposed upon themselves,

and have either overlaid or inlaid their buildings with their architecture. Of course the result of this process can no more be accepted as an architectural organism than if they had hung water-proof paper on the outer walls instead of decorating them with carving, or moulding, or what not, built in the walls, but no more architecturally related to them than the paper-hanging. But this is precisely what has been done in every "free classic" building, with more or less skill and dissimulation of the process. It is seldom done with the winning candor with which it has been done in the house of Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt in New York, which is officially described as a specimen of the "Greek Renaissance," possibly because its architectural details are all Roman. In that edifice two bands of exquisite carving—exquisite in execution, that is to say—which girdle the building, simply occur on the wall at levels where they are quite meaningless in relation to the building; where, consequently, they would not help the expression of the building, if the building could be said to have any expression beyond that of settled gloom; and where the irrelevant carving, not being framed by itself, would contradict the expression of a structure which was architecturally, and not alone mechanically, a building. How much this carving would gain by being framed away, so that if it did not help, it should at least not injure, the architecture to which it is attached, may be seen by comparing these Vanderbilt houses with a brown-stone house, in formal Renaissance, in upper Fifth Avenue, near Sixty-ninth Street, where the carving is neither better cut nor more abundant than that of the Vanderbilt houses, but where its disposition at least appears to be premeditated, and not casual.

It would scarcely be worth while to point out the faults of designs, if they can even be described as such,

so generally disesteemed as those of the two houses built for Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt, "those boxes of brown stone with architecture appliqué." But it is worth pointing out that the radical error, which in these appears so crudely and naïvely as to be patent to the wayfaring man who has never thought about architecture, is latent in all the works of the Queen Anne movement—to which these houses do not specifically belong — and must vitiate every attempt to adjust classic detail to free and modern composition. Classic detail cannot grow out of modern structures faithfully designed for modern purposes as it grows out of antique structure, or as Gothic ornament grows out of Gothic structure, like an efflorescence. It must be "adjusted" as visibly an after-thought, and to say this is to say that in all Queen Anne buildings the architecture is appliqué.

However, to disparage Queen Anne is not to explain its acceptance. It looks like a mere masquerade of nineteenth-century men in eighteenth-century clothes, and with many of its practitioners it is no more. In England it seems to have originated as a caprice by which a clever and dashing but by no means epoch-making architect misled the younger and weaker of his brethren. In this country, which had never been much more architecturally than an English colony, there seemed special reasons for following the new fashion of being old-fashioned. American architects, and American builders before there were any American architects, had been exhorted, as they have lately been exhorted again, to do something distinctively American. The colonial building, which was done by trained English mechanics, was of the same character as the contemporary domestic work of England, and showed in its ornament the same unreflecting acceptance of a set of forms and formulæ bequeathed as a tradition of the trade and



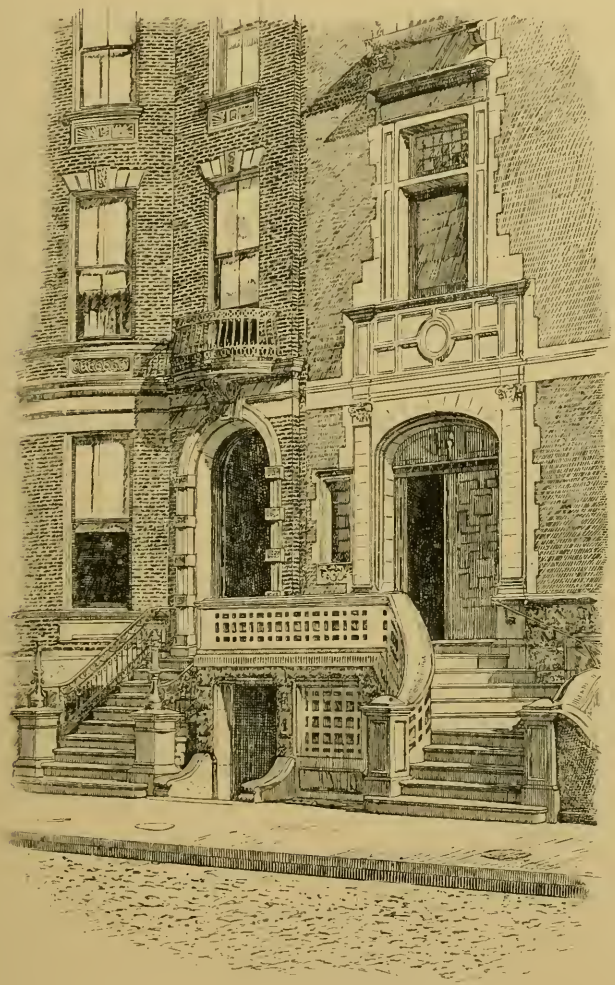
RECESSED BALCONY, W. H. VANDERBILT'S HOUSE, FIFTH AVENUE.
Herter Brothers, Architects.

part of the outfit of a journeyman. Although Jefferson complained that in his time and in rural Virginia it was impossible to "find a workman who could draw an order," it is evident that there was no difficulty of that kind in other parts of the country. These trained workmen, it is to be noted, were all carpenters, and there is probably no work in stone which shows an equal precision and facility in workmanship. Such buildings as the New York City Hall and the Albany Academy were clearly the work of architects of culture according to the standard of the time. The only architectural qualities of the works of the mechanics were the moderation and respectability of detail, which they had learned as part of their trade, and it is quite absurd to ascribe to these buildings any value as works of art. It is particularly absurd to assign the degradation of house-building which undoubtedly followed, and which made the typical American house, after the Greek temple had spent its force, the most vulgar habitation ever built by man, to the substitution of book-learned architects for handicraftsmen. People talk as if the middle part of Fifth Avenue, the brown-stone high-stoop house with its bloated detail, which displaced the prim precision of the older work, had been done by educated architects. In fact, there was hardly a single building put up in New York after the design of an educated architect between the works we have mentioned and the erection of Trinity Church by Mr. Upjohn in 1845, which not only marked a great advance over anything that had been done before, but began the Gothic revival to which we directly or indirectly owe whatever of merit has been done since, including so much of Queen Anne as, not being Queen Anne, is good. But the bulk of the building which gave its architectural character to New York and to the country continued to be done by mechanics,

who continued, so far as they could, to supply the demand of the market, who gradually lost the training their predecessors had enjoyed, and who lost also all sense of the necessity for that training in the new demand that their work should be, above all things, "American." As the slang of to-day puts it, they were exhorted, as the architects are still sometimes exhorted, to "talk United States." They might have answered that there was no such language, and that a few bits of slang did not constitute a poetical vocabulary. The feeling which urges an artist to be patriotic by being different from other people not long ago led Mr. Walt Whitman to resent the absence of an "autochthonous" poetry, and has lately led a newspaper writer to call the attention of a New England building committee to the log cabin as the most suitable motive for a town-hall they are going to build.

The Northern reader notes with mild amusement the occasional resentment in the Southern press of the absence of a "distinctive Southern literature," and perceives the plaint to be provincial; but he is not so quick to perceive that his own clamor for an American this or that is equally provincial. The hard lot of the American painter has often been bewailed, in that, when he has tried to rid himself of his provincialism by learning to paint, and has learned to paint more or less as other men do who have learned to paint, he is straightway berated for not being provincial. If American literature or painting or architecture be good, the Americanism of it may safely be left to take care of itself. But a man cannot be expected to innovate to much purpose upon usages with which he is unfamiliar; and the effects which Mr. Whitman's admonition to his fellow-poets to "fix their verses to the gauge of the round globe" would probably have upon an aspiring young poet, conscious

of genius, but weak in his parts of speech, are the effects which the demand for aboriginality actually had upon the race of builders, whether they were content with that



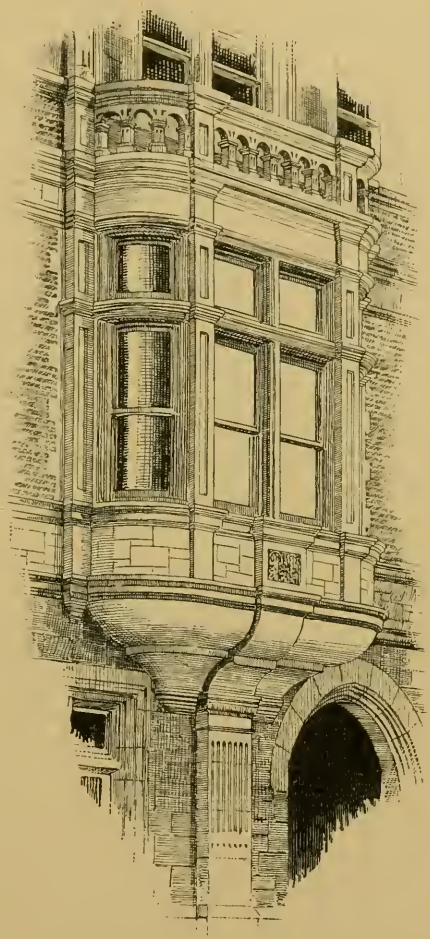
DOORWAYS ON MADISON AVENUE.
G. E. Harney, and McKim, Mead, & White, Architects.

title, or without any sufficient provocation described themselves as architects. They undoubtedly attained

difference, and their works did not remind the travelled observer of any of the masterpieces of Europe. It is quite conceivable and not at all discreditable that the wild work of Broadway and of Fifth Avenue should have led architects of sensibility to cast many longing, lingering looks behind at the decorum of the Bowling Green and Washington Square, and to sigh for a return of the times when the common street architecture of New York was sober and respectable, even if it was conventional and stupid.

This justifiable preference for Bowling Green and Washington Square and St. John's Park over Broadway and Madison Square and Murray Hill, for an architecture confessedly colonial over an architecture aggressively provincial, is no doubt the explanation why so many of our younger architects made haste to fall in behind the Queen Anne standard. What we really have a right to blame them for is for not so far analyzing their own emotions as to discover that the qualities they admired in the older work, or admired by comparison with the newer, were not dependent upon the actual details in which they found them. To be "content to dwell in decencies forever" was not considered the mark of a lofty character even by a poet of the time of Queen Anne. If virtue were, indeed, "too painful an endeavor," and if there were no choice except between the state of dwelling in decencies and the state of dwelling in indecencies forever, we could but admit that they had chosen the better part. But they were not, in fact, confined to a choice between these alternatives. The Gothic revival in England, after twenty years, had succeeded in establishing something much more like a real vernacular architecture than had been known in England before since the building of the cathedrals — an architecture which, although starting from formulas and traditions, had attained to principles, and was true, earnest, and

alive. It was quite inevitable that it should be crude in proportion as it was alive, according to the frankness with which it recognized that we live in times unknown to the ancients, and endeavored to respond with changes in its organism to changes wrought in its environment by new requirements and new knowledge, with forms necessarily rude, inchoate, embryonic, as beseems the formative period of letters and of arts as of life, in contrast with the ultimate refinement which is the mark of a completed development. But that these crudities would be refined was also inevitable; that they were in process of refinement was apparent. Another generation of artists as earnest as those who began the Gothic revival might have brought this rough and swelling bud to a splendid blossom. But in an evil hour, and under a strange spell, the young architects of the United States followed the young architects of England in pre-

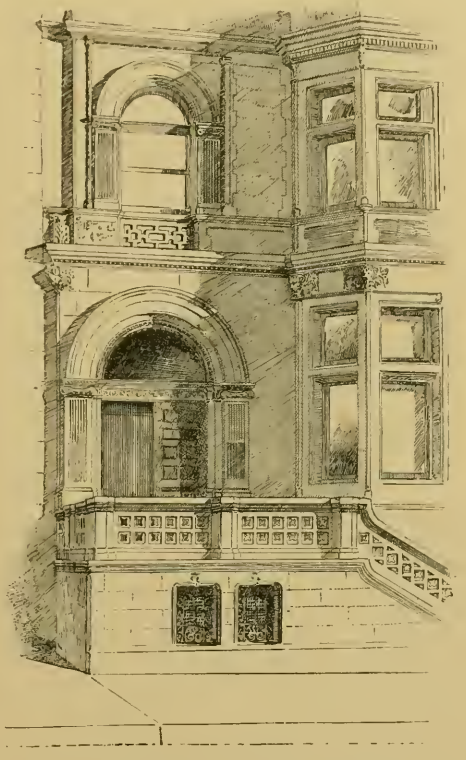


ORIEL OF HOUSE IN FIFTY-FIFTH STREET.
C. C. Haight, Architect.

ferring the refinements of a fixed and developed architecture to the rudenesses of a living and growing architecture. Because they did not see their way at once to "supply every deficiency and symmetrize every disproportion," they did not leave this for their successors, but abandoned the attempt at an expression of the things they were doing for the elegant expression in antique architecture of meanings that have grown meaningless to modern men.

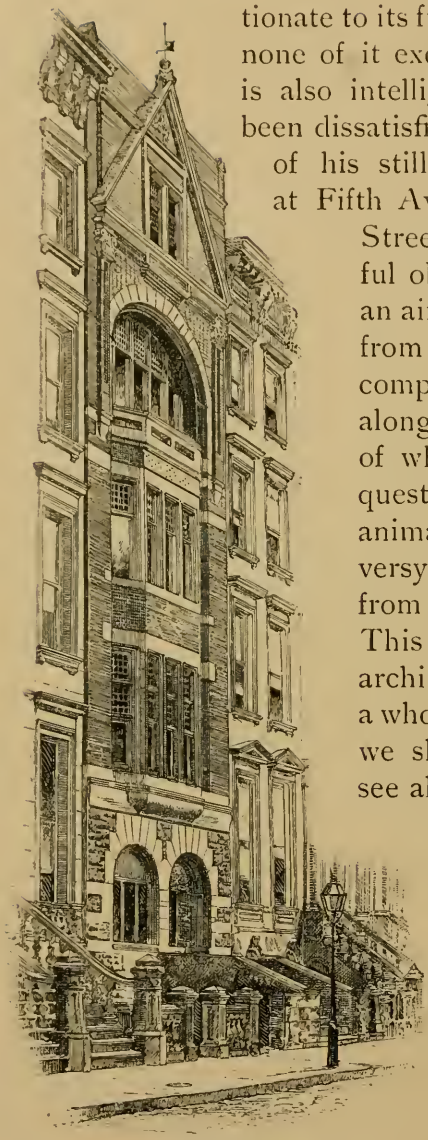
They have had their way in New York for seven or eight years, during a period unprecedented in building activity, and out of all comparison in the profusion with which money has been lavished upon building and decoration. What have they gained for architectural art? They have, indeed, subjected many miles of sandstone to the refining influence of egg-and-dart mouldings (the designer of a house in Fifth Avenue has so much faith in the efficacy of that ornament that he has belted his street front with three rows of it, one above the other), and triglyphs (faithfully to have contemplated which softens the manners, nor suffers to be rude) have been brought within the reach of the humblest in the decoration of tenement-houses. They have built so much and so expensively that they have produced in minds—like some of their own—which do not reflect much upon these things the impression that if luxury and art be not synonymous, they are at least inseparably connected, with the latter in the capacity of handmaiden. But will any educated architect assert that the characteristic monuments of the last five or six years—greatly superior in quantity, and superior by a great multiple in cost—are equal in architectural value to the work of the decade preceding? Suppose that Mr. Norman Shaw had not bedevilled the weaker of his brethren, and that this unprecedented building ac-

tivity and this unparalleled spending of money that have fallen under the control of architects had been directed along the lines laid down by the Gothic revivalists, and had extended, consolidated, and refined the work begun and carried on here by such architects as Mr. Upjohn, Mr. Eidlitz, Mr. Withers, Mr. Cady, Mr. Potter, and Mr. Wight, will any educated architect maintain that the result of such a process would not have been nobler monuments than any to which we can point as characteristic products of the later movement?



DOORWAY. FIFTH AVENUE, BELOW SEVENTY-FIFTH STREET.
R. H. Robertson, Architect.

We might ask Mr. Harney, for example, who has been one of the noteworthy contributors to the works of both periods, whether in falling to "grace" he has not fallen from something more important. One can readily understand that Mr. Harney, in contemplating the effect of his completed work in the respectable warehouse at the corner of Bond Street and Broadway, should have been disappointed in the effect of much of the detail he had designed for his building, should have found some of it rude, some of it dispropor-



HOUSE IN FIFTY-SIXTH STREET.
Bruce Price, Architect.

tionate to its function and position, and none of it exquisite in modelling. It is also intelligible that he may have been dissatisfied with some parts even of his still more successful house at Fifth Avenue and Fifty-seventh Street, which, always a grateful object, has lately acquired an air of additional distinction from the eager architectural competition which has set in alongside of it, and the results of which give an air of unquestionable animation—the animation of excited controversy—to Fifty-seventh Street from Fifth to Sixth Avenue. This dissatisfaction, if the architect underwent it, was a wholesome discontent which we should have expected to see allayed by more thoroughly studied detail in Mr. Harney's succeeding work. But it seems to have been a morbid sensitiveness to the defects of his work which led Mr. Harney to abandon altogether, and in despair, the practice of architectural design, and, when he had another commercial building to do, to erect in Wall Street an entirely ineffectual structure,

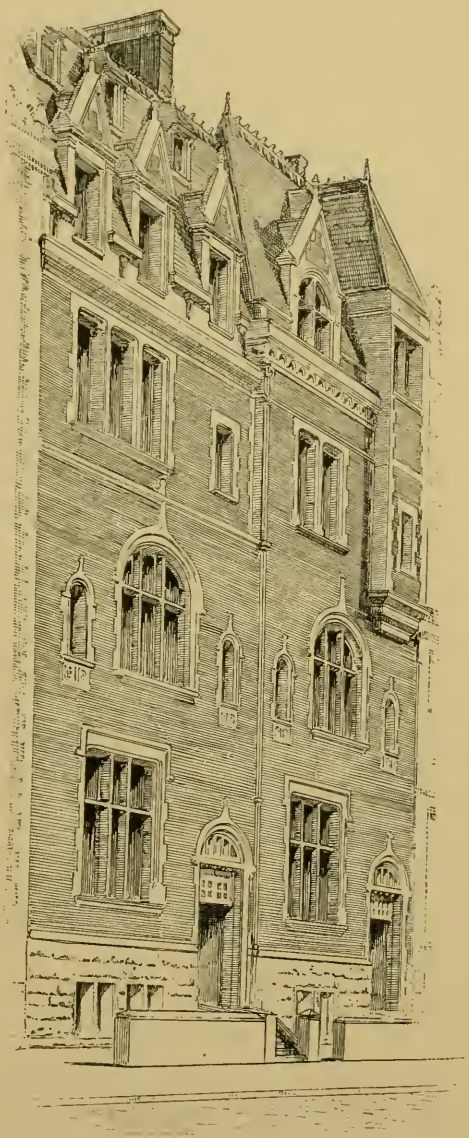
of which the architecture that one carries away with him consists in a crow-stepped gable, an irrelevant entablature appliqué which crosses the building half-way up, and windows covered with flat arches, the key-stones of which are "shored up" by the mullions; and, when he had another city house to do, to depute the design of it to some unknown carpenter who died before he was born, and to reproduce accurately in Madison Avenue a Vandam or Charlton Street house built out of due time, with a familiar "old New York" doorway, in the jambs of which quoins intercept sheaves of mouldings. This confession that a carpenter of 1825 was a better-trained designer than an educated architect of 1880 is very possibly creditable to the personal modesty of the latter; but Mr. Harney's own earlier works sufficiently testify that it does not do him justice.

Mr. Cady, one of the most important and distinguished of the contributors to the Gothic revival in New York, has also of late years become a convert to the new movement, and seems from our point of view to have thrown himself away with even less sufficient cause than that which impelled Mr. Harney to his rash act. For we have distinctly admitted that Mr. Harney had reason to be dissatisfied with his Gothic detail, while we cannot make that admission in behalf of Mr. Cady. Mr. Cady's newer work is shown in a house of red-brick and brown sandstone, which he contributed to the architectural competition just noticed. This edifice shows a desire to live at peace in the midst of very quarrelsome neighbors. Mr. Cady, indeed, could scarcely design a vulgar and vociferous work if he tried. At any rate, he has never tried, and does not in the least need to be put under the bonds of a style in order to insure his keeping the peace. One wonders what Mr. Cady believes himself to have gained in abandoning the

style of his brilliant Art Building in Brooklyn for the style of his not very noticeable house in Fifty-seventh Street.

Quietude can, no doubt, be attained in Queen Anne; but it can also be attained, by architects who are really in quest of it, in other styles quite as well, which admit a much wider range of expression, while the student is forced to doubt whether by means of the meagre repertory of Queen Anne any other quality than quietude can be expressed. Its successes in domestic architecture are mainly the successes of unnoticeableness, which is really the character not only of the dwellings just mentioned, but of a house by Mr. Robertson in Fifth Avenue, of a house by Mr. Haight in Fifty-fifth Street, and of a house, which has the great advantage of double the usual frontage, by Messrs. McKim, Mead, & White, in Madison Avenue, adjoining Mr. Harney's reproduction; for the tall red-brick house in Thirty-fourth Street by these latter architects, which looks less like a work of architectural art than a magnified piece of furniture "with the Chippendale feeling," can scarcely be called successful, while the house they designed for Mr. Astor in Fifth Avenue, a simply and quietly treated street front in brick and sandstone, can certainly not be called Queen Anne, in spite of the three rows of egg-and-dart moulding, already remarked, which crown its rock-faced basement. The highest praise to which these typical Queen Anne houses can aspire, in spite of some thoroughly studied detail, such as the treatment of the oriel in that one designed by Mr. Haight, is that they look like eligible mansions for highly respectable families content with dwelling in the decencies; and this is also the highest praise that can be bestowed upon their prototypes of the Georgian era. We can repeat the admission that it is far better they should look like that than

like the habitations of vulgarly ostentatious persons, without thereby admitting that the prim and prosaic expression of respectability never so eminent can be scored as a triumph in domestic architecture. The domestic architecture of Venice, or Rouen, or Nuremberg has something more to say to us than that. And a touch of such spirit and picturesqueness as Mr. Bruce Price has given us in a brick house in Fifty-sixth Street (p. 22), or as Mr. Hunt has given us not only in the elaborately ornate house of Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt, but in some dwellings in upper Madison Avenue, is more to be desired than a mere omission to outrage decorum.



HOUSES IN MADISON AVENUE.
R. M. Hunt, Architect.

Such as the successes of Queen Anne in domestic architecture are, they are its only successes,

although it is only fair to say that much interesting work has been done in it, if not strictly of it, in suburban houses and sea-side cottages, which do not come within our present scope. A "feature" suffices for the architecture of a narrow street front, and a feature may be compiled out of the repertory of Queen Anne by a designer who thinks that result a reward of his pains. The oriel, for example, in effect comprises the architecture of the house just mentioned as designed by Mr. Haight. But even in a house which is only a feature the classic detail is not always adjusted without a visible incongruity to the constructions, out of which classic detail cannot spontaneously grow as it grew out of classic constructions. The doorway, for example, of the house designed by Mr. Robertson, which is virtually repeated in the window over it, is a moulded round arch standing upon pilasters of its own width, and thus apparently making of the jamb and arch a complete and detached construction. That is to say, the pilasters seem to carry the arch. The architect of the New York Post-office has done the same thing in a much ruder way. But the elegance of Mr. Robertson's detail cannot rid even the spectator who does not stop to analyze the source of the feeling of an uneasy sensation that what is thus elegantly expressed is not the fact. An arch does, in fact, exercise a lateral as well as a vertical pressure; and if the arch and its vertical supports formed a detached construction, as they here appear to do, the arch would be unstable. Insensible as the classical Romans were to considerations of artistic expression, they were not so insensible as this. They recognized the existence of a lateral pressure by marking the impost of the arches with a continuous moulding, thus allying the arch with its lateral abutment as well as with its vertical support; and here the architect of the Post-office, wiser, or, if

thought be not predicable of his architecture, more fortunate than Mr. Robertson, has been content to imitate them.

The buildings in which these solecisms appear, we repeat, are the successes of Queen Anne. For structures more complicated most of its practitioners have shrunk from invoking it. Messrs. Peabody and Stearns, indeed, took the ground, when they designed the Union League Club House, that a "feature" supplied a sufficient idea for that edifice; and that a portico of four large Roman Corinthian columns in front, subdued to an equal number of brick pilasters on the side, would meet the architectural requirements of the case, if they let their consciousness play freely over the remaining surfaces without reference to this central thought. But the result has scarcely justified this belief, and the spectator finds that the building, in spite of the unifying influence of a large and simple roof, in addition to the feature in question, does not make a total impression, but is scattering and confused; while its parts, taken singly, are feeble in spite of their extravagant scale. This, indeed, is not even a sacrifice to the conventions, but a specimen of what can be achieved in a style of gentle dulness gone rampant. If tame Queen Anne is a somewhat ineffectual thing, what shall be said of wild Queen Anne? There is nothing wild about two other public buildings in which architects have ventured upon Queen Anne—one a hospital, in Park Avenue, by Mr. Haight, and one an "institution" of some other kind, in Lexington Avenue, by Mr. Fernbach. Both of these, indeed, are tame, and whatever the differences of detail may be, both have much the same expression, so that one carries away from either, as from one of the commonplace faces which we are always confounding, an impression which may

be that of the other—in either case of a centre with projecting wings separately roofed, and the whole wall overlaid with a shallow trellis of brick-work, too shallow to be serviceable as buttresses, and serviceable only as the badge of the alleged "style." It seems hard upon an owner that he should be required to pay money for rectangular applications of brick which can scarcely strengthen his building appreciably, and can hardly be held to beautify it, by way merely of labelling it, "This is Queen Anne." And this resemblance, be it noted, which is not so much a specific resemblance as the expression of an amiable characterlessness common to both, is not all to be imputed to the architects, except upon the ground of their choice of a style. The works of both of them have character, and not at all the same character, when they are working in a style which is a real form-language in which meanings can be expressed, and not a mere little phrase-book containing elegant extracts wherewith to garnish aimless discourse. Mr. Fernbach,* as is testified by such works as the "Staats-Zeitung" building and the German Savings-Bank in New York, and the building of the Mutual Insurance Company in Philadelphia, is one of the most accomplished practitioners in this country of academic Renaissance. Mr. Haight, as we shall presently see more at large, is a highly accomplished designer in Gothic. It is not their fault if Queen Anne, when spread over an extensive façade, spreads thin.

Mr. Robertson is the only architect who has had the temerity to attempt a Queen Anne church, and the success of his essay is not such as to invite imitation. The essay itself is a little church in Madison Avenue, with not much of Queen Anne in the main walls, which

* Died 1883.

are of a rugged rusticity, with the needful openings left square-headed and unmodelled; but these walls are crowned with a clere-story faced with yellow shingles, under a broad gable, and its openings united under a thin ogee canopy of painted pine. There is here and there a little classic detail, which, if it pleases the designer, certainly hurts nobody; but it is the interior that is dedicated to Queen Anne. Here one may see what the German critics call the "playful use" of forms devised for one construction and one material in another material and with no visible construction; and the result of this pleasantry is what a German professor, celebrated in recent fiction, describes as "an important joke." In the main features of this interior, however, the treatment passes a joke, for the mahogany nave arches, with their little protruding key-woods, and their supporting posts incased in boxed pedestals, are actually doing the work of carrying the clere-story—unless, indeed, there is a concealed system of iron-work—although their function is so far sacrificed to their form that they are doing the work in the most ungainly and ineffective fashion. Above this, as the repertory of Queen Anne contains no forms that can be even tortured into the construction of an open ceiling, the architect has omitted design altogether, and left his ceiling a mere loft, sheathed underneath with yellow pine. Elsewhere, as in the fittings of the chancel, the use of forms is entirely playful, so that the interior of the church seems to be a collection of pleasantries. In a dining-room, for example, we should pronounce them good jokes, but really in a church a discussion of their merit as jokes seems to be ruled out by the previous question as to the admissibility in the sacred edifice of levity even of the highest order. It is perhaps fortunate for the appliers of Queen Anne to ecclesiastical uses, and indeed

for the designers of "cozy" churches in general, that there is no official censorship of church architecture as there is of church music, and that no rubric makes it the duty of every minister, with such assistance as he can obtain from persons skilled in architecture, to suppress all light and unseemly architecture by which vain and ungodly persons profane the service of the sanctuary. We may ask Mr. Robertson, in the spirit in which we have been asking other architects, what he has gained by abandoning such an effort as he made some ten years before in the Phillips Memorial Church to develop a composition out of his subject in favor of these scraps of quotations, and of quotations neither fresh nor very pregnant! He might answer that the church in which we admire at least the effort was a somewhat untamed and obstreperous fabric, and that the present edifice is much more chastened and subdued. It is tame, no doubt, and Mr. Robertson's talent, when he works in Queen Anne, is subdued—

> "subdued
> To what it works in, like the dyer's hand;"

but, upon the whole, it is difficult to see how the architect, comparing the earlier with the later work, could fail to feel that the attempt to express something, however crude and so far unsuccessful the attempt might have been, was a more manly and artistic employment than this elegant trifling, in which the highest attainable success has an element of puerility. In truth, it is gratifying to remark that the argument by which we have supposed the architect to have solaced himself for the result of his ecclesiastical labors in Queen Anne does not seem to have convinced himself, and that a later work still, a sandstone church farther down the same avenue, is a much more serious piece of design,

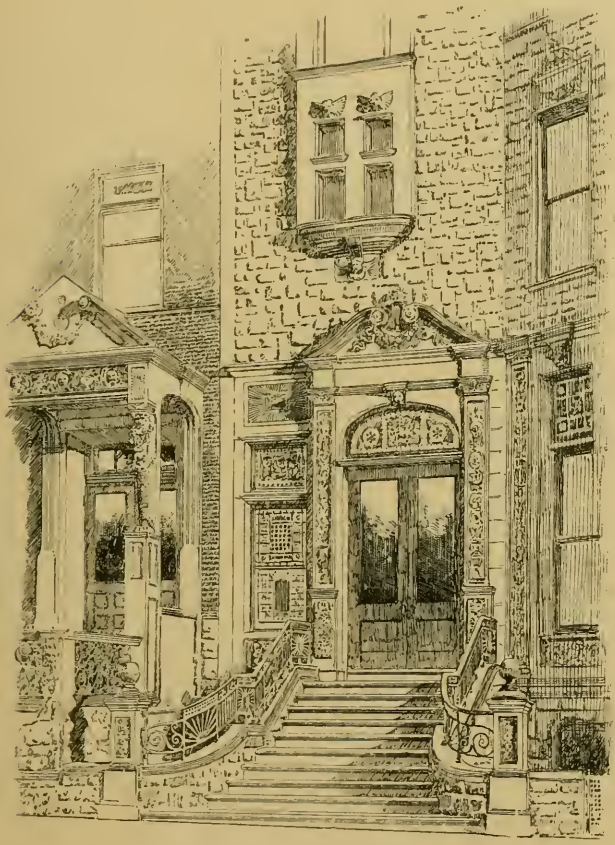
being an attempt to develop the architecture out of the structure itself. It would be especially unjust to misapply to Mr. Robertson's Queen Anne church the saying that the style is the man, for the church last mentioned shows that Mr. Robertson is a man of talents, when he gives his talents a chance.

Thus far we have been speaking of the respectable and conservative element in the new departure, of the Extreme Right, so to speak, and generally of works which were seriously designed, and so are entitled to be seriously considered. It is not so pleasant to turn to the Extreme Left, a frantic and vociferous mob, who welcome the "new departure" as the disestablishment of all standards, whether of authority or of reason, and as an emancipation from all restraints, even those of public decency, and who avail themselves of the remission of them from academic restraints to those imposed by their own sense of propriety by promptly showing that they haven't any. The tame decorum of one phase of the new departure is supplemented by the violent indecorum of another. Sometimes the same designers march now with one wing and now with the other of the divergent host. Messrs. McKim, Mead, & White, for example, have consoled themselves for what now almost seems to have been the enforced sedateness of the houses we have noticed, by a mad orgy of bad architecture in East Fifty-fifth Street. The scene of this excess almost immediately adjoins the dignified and respectable dwelling designed by Mr. Haight, and almost frights that edifice from its propriety, and the designers seem to have been led into it by the baleful example of older persons who ought to have known better, and who committed the maddest freaks in the artistic quarter of the London suburb of Chelsea while in a condition of total irresponsibility alike to any con-

victions and to any conventions of architectural art. The present indecorum has been committed in the design of two dwellings which consist of a ferociously rugged basement and parapeted cornice in granite, with two or three irregularly disposed tin dormers emerging above, and with a flat and shallow screen of brick wall inserted between them, as between the upper and the nether millstone, and having its thinness emphasized at all the angles by shallow incisions forming a series of brick weather-strips, as it were, a square reticulation of which traverses the plane surfaces also. It is quite conceivable that rugged simplicity may have suggested itself to a designer as a desirable character for a city house, but it seems scarcely possible that squareness and flatness and thinness should have appeared desirable, and quite impossible that beauty should have seemed to dwell in a building the top and bottom of which were characterized by rugged simplicity, and the middle by squareness and flatness and thinness. The details, whether in brick or granite or tin, are as preposterous as the conception of a building with its parts thus swearing at each other. The round-headed doorway is surmounted with the imitation in granite of a metal flap secured to the rest of the block from which it is cut by similitudes in granite of iron bolt-heads. In the basement respectable blocks of granite are subjected to the indignity of being decorated with streaming ribbons in low-relief. In truth, the only detail of the work which one can contemplate even with tolerance is a grill in the basement doorway which is the simplest possible trellis of iron rods.

Indecorous and incoherent as this edifice unquestionably is, it has yet the air of a gentleman taking his pleasure, albeit in a perverse and vicious fashion, when compared, for example, with the dwellings in red brick

and brown stone at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Sixty-seventh Street. In these there is no composition whatever, and the effect is so scattering, and the whole is so fortuitous an aggregation of unrelated parts, that



DOORWAY AT FIFTH AVENUE AND SIXTY-SEVENTH STREET.

it is impossible to describe the houses or to remember them when one's back is turned. Their fragments only recur to memory, as the blurred images of a hideous dream. So one recalls the Batavian grace of the bulbous gables; the oriel-windows, so set as to seem in im-

minent danger of toppling out; the egg-and-dart moulding, niggled up and down jambs of brick-work connected by flat openings with protruding key-stones; the whiplashes cut in sandstone blocks; the decorative detail fished from the slums of the Rococo. These are not subjects for architectural criticism; they call for the intervention of an architectural police. They are cases of disorderly conduct done in brick and brown stone. Hazardous as the superlative degree generally is, it is not much of a hazard to say that they are the most thoroughly discreditable buildings ever erected in New York, and it is to be noted that they are thoroughly characteristic of the period. Such a nightmare might, perhaps, have entered the brain of some speculative builder during the wildest vulgarity of the brown-stone period, but he would not have had the effrontery to build it, being deterred by the consideration that nobody would face public ridicule by consenting to live in it. Some speculator is, however, convinced that there is now a market for a house which stands upon the street corner, and screeches for people to come and look at it, when there is nothing in it worth looking at; and we must take shame to ourselves from the reflection that the speculator may be right in counting upon this extreme vulgarization of the public taste, and that, at any rate, there is no police to prevent the emission of the screech upon the public highway.

This is the result of a demand for "something new" upon a mind incapable of producing anything good. The screech is the utterance of the Sweet Singer of Michigan, exhorted not to mind about grammar, but "to fix her verses to the gauge of the round globe." It is an extreme instance, to be sure; but there are others only less discreditable, and only to be dealt with in the way of what is called "slashing" criticism, which

probably never yet served any more important purpose than to ease the critic's mind. It is enough to indicate these things, and to point out that they are all produced

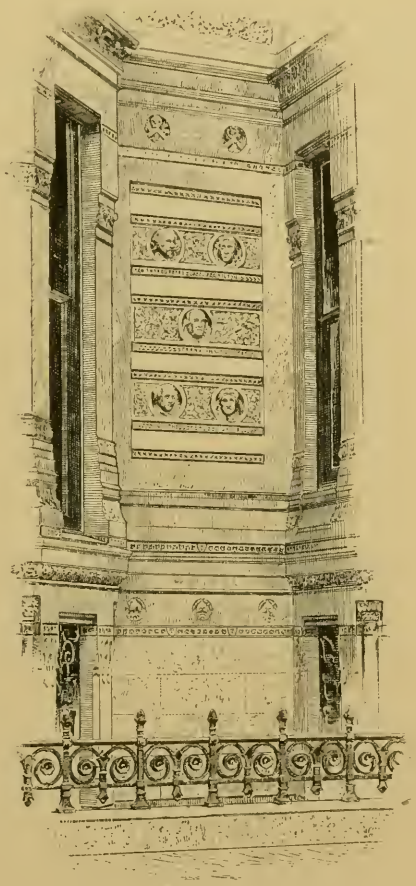
GLIMPSE OF COLUMBIA COLLEGE FROM MADISON AVENUE.
C. C. Haight, Architect.

by the strain in the minds of incompetent designers after originality and aboriginality—a purpose essentially vulgar, which would vitiate the work even of a competent designer wherever it could be detected. For although the pursuit of excellence is sure to result in novelty, the pursuit of novelty is sure not to result in excellence. The extreme instance we have cited is still

an instance of a tendency to which all the younger generation of architects, of whom so much was hoped, and of whom, considering their opportunities, so little of value has come, have more or less yielded—the tendency to take themselves too seriously and their art not seriously enough, and to imagine that anything that occurs to them is for that reason good enough to build, without asking it any questions. Such caricatures of architecture as these houses would not occur to the mind of an educated architect; but when all restraints, rational and academic, are removed, even educated architects, as we have seen, will not always take the trouble to analyze their conceptions before embodying them in durable brick and stone. It is from this that it comes that, as we said awhile ago, the characteristic works of the present period are distinctly inferior to the characteristic works of the preceding period. It is not that thoroughly good buildings have not been done within the latter period, but that they are not characteristic of the period. The buildings which appear to have been done by architects, and yet fail to stand the tests either of sense or of style, date themselves infallibly as having been done since 1876. One must resort to external evidence to ascertain whether the buildings that are honorable monuments to their architects were done before or since Mr. Norman Shaw did all this mischief.

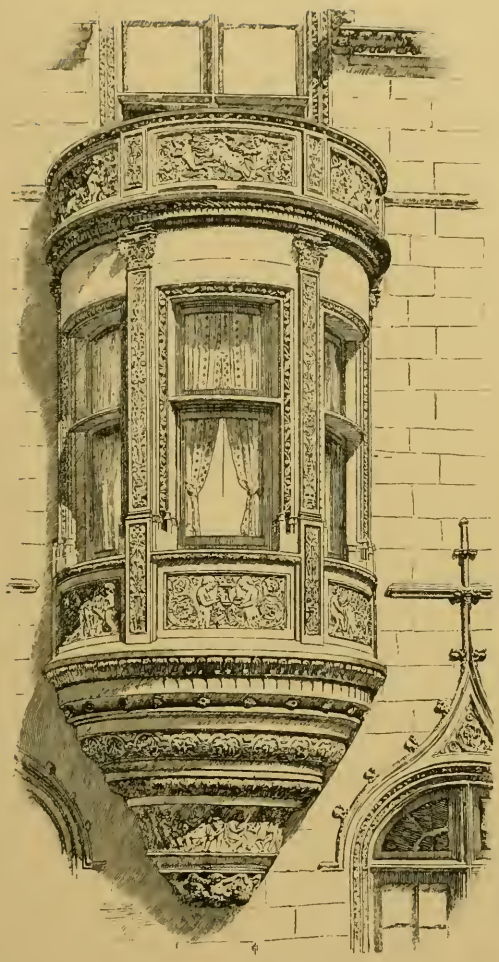
First among these, one has little hesitation in placing the new buildings designed by Mr. Haight for Columbia College. Mr. Haight has not here been in pursuit of novelty, but has been content with conforming his structure to its function, and modelling the masses thus arrived at so as to heighten their inherent expression. And although he has kept within the limits of historical English Gothic in doing this, the result of the process is an individual building with a characteristic ex-

pression of its own, the most successful piece of Gothic design that has been done in New York since Mr. Withers designed the Jefferson Market Court-house. In Queen Anne, as we saw, Mr. Haight's work was not very distinguishable from the work of a very different architect. With a vocabulary limited to fifty words, not much can be expressed. But when he permits himself the use of language, it is seen that Mr. Haight can express thoughts. In composition and in detail these buildings are thoroughly studied and thoroughly effective. In the earlier, a street front of a whole block on Madison Avenue, the designer has resisted the temptation to diversify his building into unrest, but has built a wall of three stories in red brick and light sandstone, the broad and quiet aspect of which is enhanced by the grouping of the openings, and not disturbed by the chimney-stacks and the oriel and the turret which animate the composition. The later building, of the same materials, has been built



FROM GOVERNOR TILDEN'S HOUSE.
Calvert Vaux, Architect.

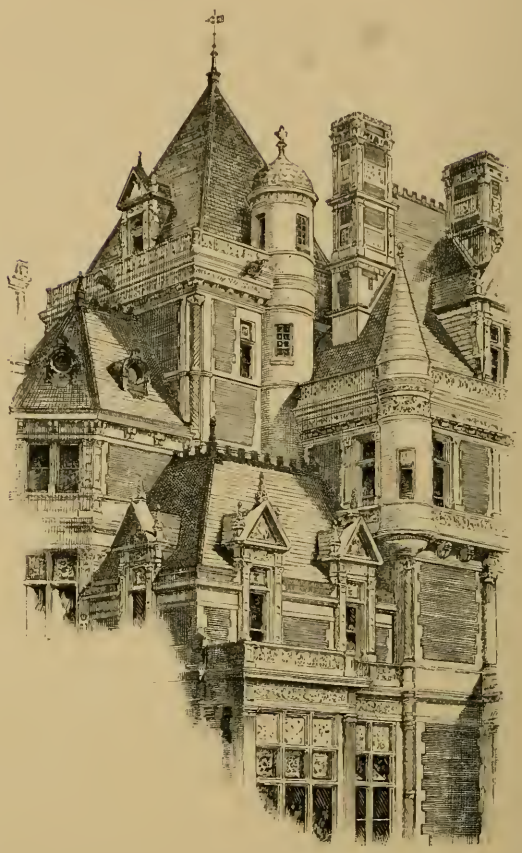
for the library of the college, and the large hall which contains this is in effect the building. This is treated with equal skill, and to the same result of cloistral repose, of harmony and dignity and grace. These vigorous and refined works show, if the showing were needed, except by the architects of the new departure, that vigor does not necessarily involve bowlders, nor refinement microscopic mouldings, and that these short-cuts to architectural effect are rather sorry and shabby substitutes for faithful and skilful design. That these works of Mr. Haight's are grammatically "correct" Gothic is not, to our mind, either a merit or a defect. But it shows how wide is the range of expression possible in the architecture of the Middle Ages, and of its pliability to modern uses, that without a departure from precedent the needs of an American college in the nineteenth century can be completely answered in that architecture; for there is no innovation in Mr. Haight's work, unless we include the iron roof, which is partly visible from the floor of the hall. There are one or two "survivals" of forms which have lost their functions, as the unpierced pinnacled turrets at the angles of the library building and the crenellated parapet of the porch in the quadrangle. But, upon the whole, the result upon which the college and its architect are to be congratulated has been attained by following the advice of the sculptor who informed his pupil that the art was not difficult: "You simply take a piece of marble and leave out what you don't want." Mr. Haight has taken what he wanted in Gothic architecture for the uses of Columbia College, and with the trivial exceptions we have noted has left out the rest. And what is true of this work is equally true of an unpretending and picturesque piece of late Gothic, erected from Mr. Haight's designs for St. Thomas's School, in East Fifty-ninth Street.



ORIEL IN W. K. VANDERBILT'S HOUSE, FIFTY-SECOND STREET.

R. M. Hunt, Architect.

Another interesting piece of Gothic work, though this time of distinctly Victorian Gothic, is the house designed by Mr. Vaux for Governor Tilden. The interest of this, however, is rather in the detail of form and color than in general composition, since the building is architecturally only a street front, and since the slightness of the projections and the lack of visible and emphasized depth in the wall itself give it the appearance rather of a screen than of one face of a building, and the small gables which surmount it too evidently exist for the sole purpose of animating the sky-line. But the color treatment of this front is admirable, and recalls the best work of the most successful colorist in architecture whom we have ever had in New York—Mr. Wrey Mould. It is characteristic that interesting treatment of color, like every other properly architectural development, has been stopped short by the new "movement." An unusually large variety of colors, and those of the most positive tints that natural stones supply, has here been employed and harmonized; and, what is even rarer, they have all been used with architectural propriety to accentuate the construction and to heighten its effect. An ingenious and novel use of dark granite, which when polished is almost black, and which is employed in narrow bands precisely where it is wanted, deserves particular remark. The decorative carving attracts attention chiefly by its profusion, and by the exquisite crispness and delicacy of its execution. In both these respects the only parallel to it is in the house of Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt, for, as we have seen, the carving upon the houses of Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt does not count. That this carving counts so fully is the result of the skill of the architect in fixing its place and adjusting its scale so that it everywhere assists the architecture, and is better in its place than it would be in another place.



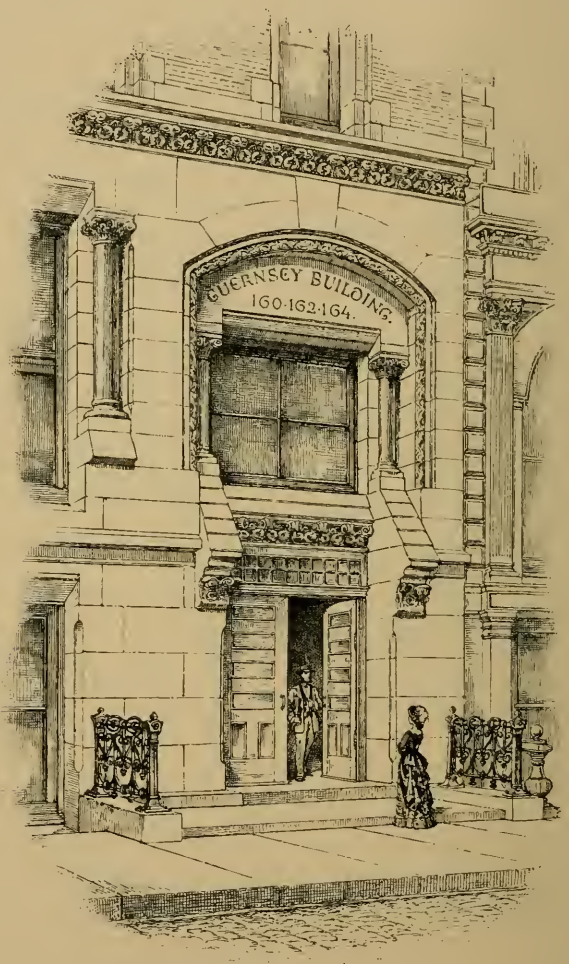
REAR OF ROOF, HOUSE OF CORNELIUS VANDERBILT, FIFTH AVENUE.
George B. Post, Architect.

These things are equally true of the equally profuse carving in the house designed by Mr. Hunt for Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt; but this, although in a monochrome of gray limestone, would have a high architectural interest without the least decoration by force of design alone. The decorative detail is scarcely so well adjusted to the building in scale as that in the house just mentioned, or in the house designed for Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt by Mr. Post, being partly lost by its minute-

ness, but it has the same merit of being in the right place, and designed for its place, and is cut with the same perfection. In a more recent work of Mr. Hunt's, the Guernsey Building, in lower Broadway—a street front in distinctly modern Gothic—there is assuredly no error in scale on the side of minuteness; but the treatment, in mass and in detail, is marked by great vigor and animation, and the architecture of the building is an emphatic expression of its structure.

Another commercial building, at the corner of Broadway and Wall Street, is by the architects of the Union League Club, and seems to have been designed under the pressure of a recent discovery that that building would not do. There is no doubt about the discovery; it is only a pity that it should not have been made from the drawings before they were translated into masonry. Clear, however, as the architects were on this point, they were not so clear when they began the United Bank Building what would do, and the first two stories look like a series of tentative experiments to find out. They were proving all things, perhaps, with the intention of holding fast that which was good. The practice of projecting bowlders, especially in soft sandstone, has already been mentioned as a somewhat slovenly substitute for the expression of vigor by modelling. Bowlders are projected from the piers of this basement in the most ferocious and blood-curdling manner—so ferocious, indeed, that the architects repented them of their bullying behavior. It is like the fear that came upon Snug the joiner, of the consequences that would ensue if ladies took him for the king of beasts: "Another prologue must tell he is not a lion." And so the architects seem to have taken the counsel of Nick Bottom: "Half his face must be seen through the lion's neck;

and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect—Ladies, or fair ladies, I would wish you, or, I would request you, or, I would entreat you,



DOORWAY OF GUERNSEY BUILDING, BROADWAY.
R. M. Hunt, Architect.

not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life. No, I am no such thing: I am a man as other men are:

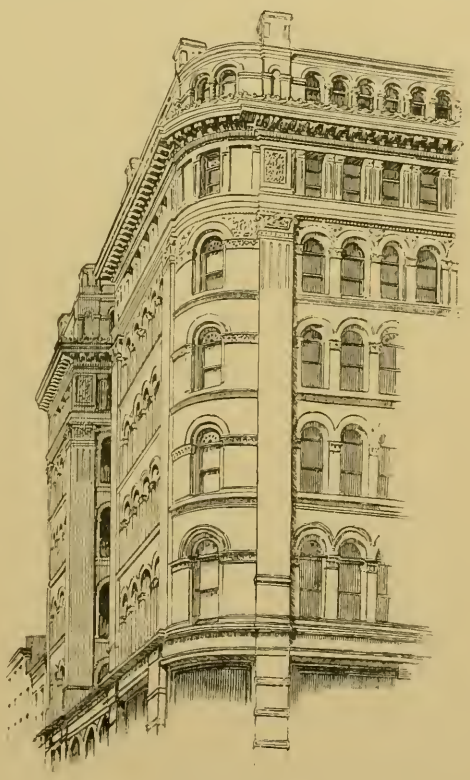
and there, indeed, let him name his name; and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner"—that is to say, Messrs. Peabody and Stearns, architects. The "other prologue," which is calculated to reassure the most timid, is the treatment of the first floor, where a disclaimer of any offensive intention is made in the insertion between the openings of pairs of banded pilasters, between the capitals of which is inserted the novel and pleasing ornament of a key-stone. In order to make sure that they are not strong enough to do any harm, they are not only designed with much feebleness, but they are projected from the face of the wall they might otherwise be imagined to strengthen, and set upon brackets. Between these Renaissance pilasters are Romanesque entrance arches, in which there is a return to truculence of demeanor; but these are seen to be not entrances at all, but only innocent windows of bank parlors, and the real entrances under them, covered with trefoiled gablets in cast iron, are obviously harmless. It is quite fair to say that up to the top of the first story there is no design in the building, nothing that betrays any evidence of a general intention. But having built thus far in futile search of a motive and of a style, they came upon both, and built over this aimless and restless collection of inconsistent details a purposeful, peaceable, and consistent brick building, a series of powerful piers connected by and sustaining powerful arches, defined by a light label moulding, and enriched at the springing with a well-designed belt of foliage. It seems incredible that the authors of this respectable building should be also the authors of the basement on which it stands. At the angle is the ingenious device of a griffin "displayed," and with one wing folded back against either wall, to carry the metal socket of the flag-staff. This feature in all its details

UNITED BANK BUILDING.
Peabody & Stearns, Architects.

is designed with great spirit and picturesqueness. But the architectural impulse fails in the attic story, which should obviously be here the richest part of the building, and which is the baldest, being only a series of rectangular holes, without either modelling or decoration, and without relation in their grouping to the openings immediately under them.

By far the most successful, however, of all the recent commercial buildings is the Post Building, designed by Mr. Post, and executed, above the blue-stone basement, in yellow brick and yellow terra-cotta. The site is an irregular tetragon at the intersection of three streets, and the court, made necessary by the depth of the plot, instead of being a well sunk in the middle of the building, is made a recess in one of the long sides. This

arrangement is not only practically convenient, but, like every arrangement obviously dictated by practical convenience, is capable of becoming architecturally effective, and here becomes so. The openings are admirably well grouped between the powerful piers, and, what is a rare attainment in "elevator architecture," there is abundant variety in their treatment, without the look of restlessness and caprice which generally attends an effort for variety in a many-storied building. The detail enhances the effect of this disposition. It is well adjusted to its function and position, nowhere excessive in quantity or in scale, and nowhere meagre, and it is in itself rich and refined. It is designed in "free Renaissance," that is to say, the designer has undertaken to model the building faithfully, according to its plan and construction, in Renaissance architecture, leaving out all that he does not want. Mr. Haight, as we saw, was able to achieve that result without transcending the lines of academic Gothic. Mr. Post has put his academic Renaissance into the alembic of analysis, and where the analy-



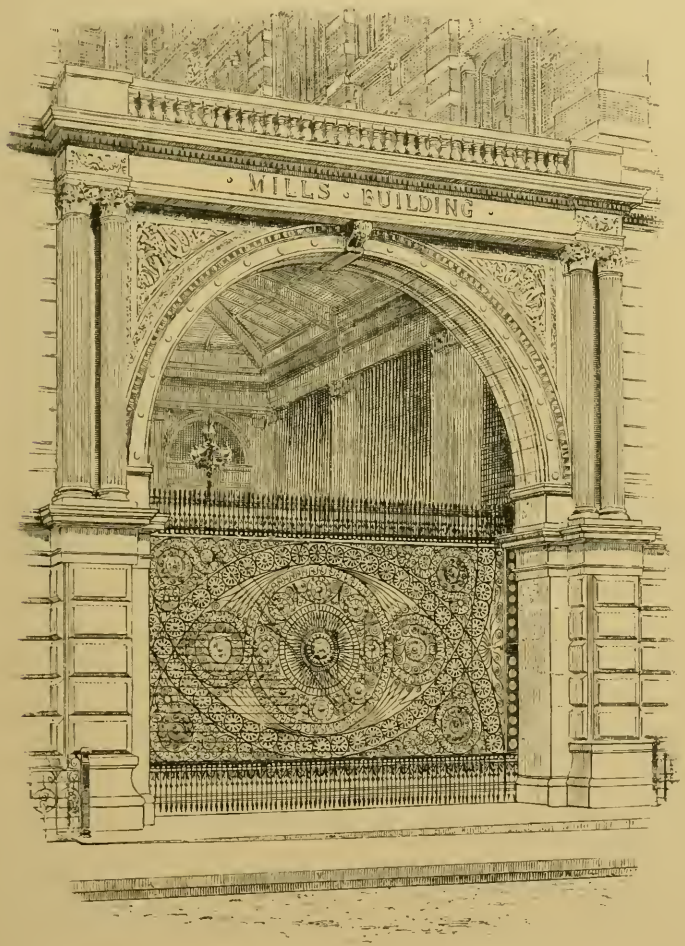
"POST" BUILDING.
George B. Post, Architect.

sis has been complete his Renaissance architecture has volatilized and disappeared. We are very sure that he had no real use for the imitations in terra-cotta of protruding key-stones, for example, and these are almost the only badges left his building of the style with which he started, except the capitals of the pilasters, and the Ionic capitals of the very pretty shafted arcade which forms the attic. But for these comparatively trivial incidents of his work, Mr. Post's free Renaissance would have to be classified as Gothic, if it were really necessary to classify it at all, except as good architecture. Mr. Post, in fact, has done on his own account what the Romanesque builders did. They, too, were doing "free classic." They began with classical Roman architecture, and, steadily leaving out what they did not want, they arrived at Westminster and Amiens and Cologne.

It is strange to see so thoroughly studied a performance as this succeeded by so thoroughly unstudied a performance as the Mills Building, by the same architect. But possibly ten-story buildings, which must be built in a year, will not wait for architects to mature designs which would make the buildings of interest to students of architecture as well as to investors. Whatever the cause may be, the result is unfortunate; for after the grandiose and somewhat swaggering Roman gateway, and the portcullis which it encloses, have been taken out, the rest of the Mills Building may safely be thrown away. The portcullis is really an interesting piece of iron-work both in design and in workmanship, although in both it is distinctly inferior to such a piece of work as the nondescript beast in cast iron that performs the humble office of holding a sign in Cedar Street, and that might have been wrought in the thirteenth century, so grotesque, so skilful, so charged

with the spirit of artistic and enjoyed handicraft it is. [See initial letter.]

So the new departure is still but a departure, and it seems time that such of the victims of it as are artists who take serious views of their art should ask themselves why they continue to work in a style which has never produced a monument, and in which it is impos-



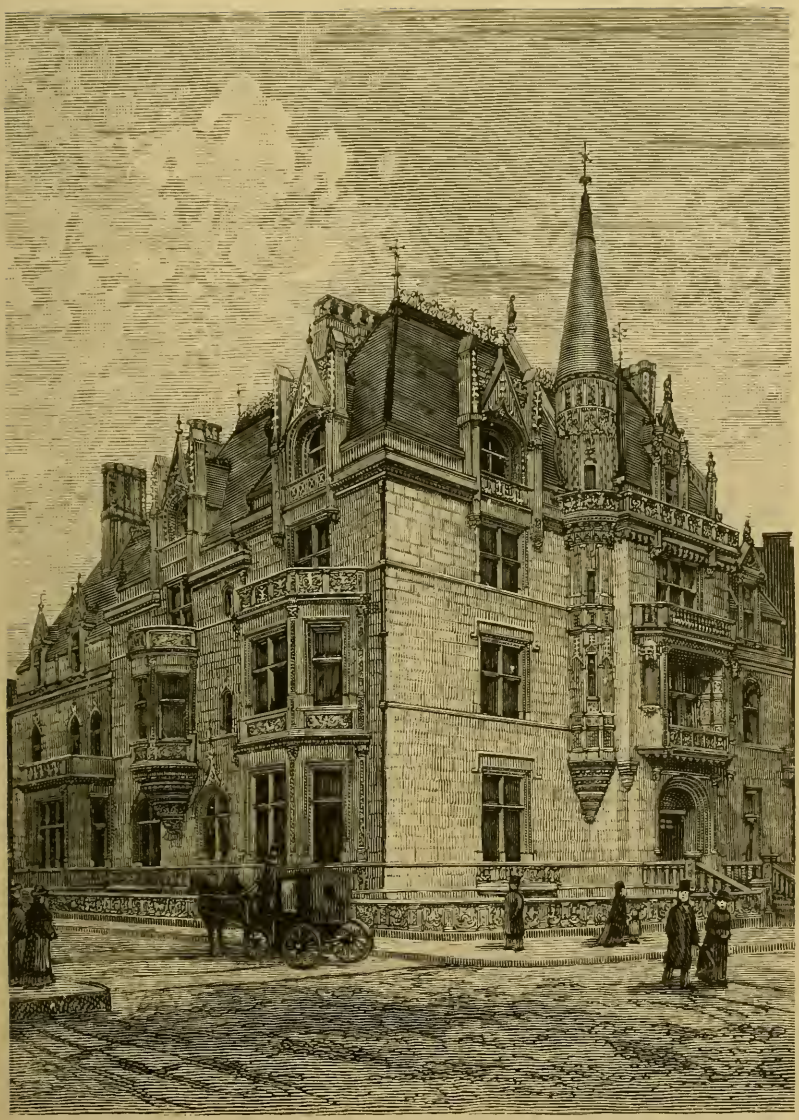
GATEWAY OF MILLS BUILDING.
George B. Post, Architect.

sible to discern any element of progress. In doing Queen Anne, have they done anything but follow a fashion set, as fashions in millinery and tailoring are set, by mere caprice? A professional journal has indeed declared that "architecture is very much a matter of fashion," and architects who take this view of their calling will of course build in the fashion, as they dress in the fashion, in spite of their own knowledge that the fashion is absurd. But it is impossible to regard an architect who takes this view as other than a tradesman, or to discuss his works except by telling what are the latest modes, in the manner of the fashion magazines. It seems impossible for achitects who take this view of their art to take their art seriously—anything like so seriously, for example, as they take their incomes. But for architects who love their art and believe in it, the point of "departure" is much less important than the point of arrival, and by such architects the historical styles of architecture will be rated according to the help they give in solving the architectural problems of our time. We have seen that an architect who starts from Renaissance architecture and an architect who starts from Gothic architecture, if they faithfully scrutinize their precedents, and faithfully discard such as are inapplicable, in arriving at free architecture will arrive, so far as style is concerned, at much the same result. If this process of analysis were to be carried on for a generation, it would be as difficult, and as purely a matter of speculative curiosity, to trace the sources of English and American architecture as the sources of the composite and living English language, which is adequate to every expression. We have been blaming the architects for accepting the forms of past architecture without analyzing them. But, indeed, if architects had been analysts, they would generations

ago have recognized in their work that we do live in times unknown to the ancients, whether of Athens in the fifth century before our era, or of Western Europe in the thirteenth century of our era; that within the limits set by fact and reason there is ample room for the exercise of all accomplished talents, and verge enough for the expression of all sane temperaments, while without these limits nothing can be done that will stand the test of fact and reason, which is the test of time; that "effects" cannot precede causes, and that the rudest art which is sincere is living and in the way to be refined, while the most refined art that has lost its meaning can never be made alive. The recognition of these things would have prevented a vagary like the frivolities and affectations of the new departure from attaining any vogue, but it would also have prevented the establishment of any technical styles in modern building, and instead of reproducing "examples" of one historical style and then of another, and then of a mixture of two, architects would be producing and writers would be discussing works of the great art of architecture.

THE VANDERBILT HOUSES

AS an architectural work, the house of Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt is perhaps the most noteworthy of the four large and costly mansions herewith illustrated. In this a design intrinsically interesting has been carried out with an amplitude of means of all kinds which yet nowhere degenerates into profusion or mere ostentation. The dimensions are generous for a town house, and they have been made the most of by a breadth of treatment and an emphasis of structure, in the walls at least, which enable the building to carry with grace a wealth of ornament under which many buildings of equal size would disappear. The material is a soft gray limestone, which leaves much to be desired in color, though in texture it is equally adapted to the simple and massive treatment of the walls and to the minute delicacy of the decoration, both architectural and sculptural. It is very much to the credit of the designer that in spite of a richness without many examples in our domestic architecture, except in the other dwellings of this same series, the first impression of his work, and the most abiding, is that of power and massiveness. This is secured mainly by the unbroken breadth of the flank of wall between the porch and the angle on the Fifth Avenue front of the building—unbroken except by the simple and square-headed openings with which it is pierced, and the crisp and emphatic though



HOUSE OF W. K. VANDERBILT.
R. M. Hunt, Architect.

not excessive string courses which traverse it and mark the division of the stories. It is questionable whether this massiveness is not carried too far, but everybody will admit that an excessive weight of wall is a "good fault" in the street architecture of New York, and that of the two, a dwelling is more dignified which approaches the solidity proper to a prison than one that emulates the precarious lightness proper to a greenhouse. The depth of the porch and of the recessed balcony over it in the central division of the avenue front assists this expression of solidity, and helps the building to wear its burden of decoration "lightly, like a flower." The richness, as we have said, is almost unexampled in New York. Of strictly architectural decoration—that is, of members and details which are usually designed by the architect of a building—there is a copiousness which is only saved by the means just indicated from becoming an embarrassment of riches. All this work is exquisite in execution. In design it is generally interesting and scholarly, though there is common to all of it the defect of being too small to be thoroughly well seen and thoroughly effective. The uniformity of this defect of scale seems to prove that the architect erred in estimating the effect of his design in the colorless material employed. The decoration of the recess of the balcony, too, loses effect by being entirely unrelated to the construction, and the stone trellis with which the turret at the angle is overlaid is equally irrelevant to the object to which it is applied. Architectural decoration ceases to be such when it ceases to be a development of the structure; and these exceptions, by their comparative ineffectiveness, confirm the wisdom of the rule by which elsewhere throughout the building the ornament is used to emphasize the structure, and thereby gains greatly in impressiveness and in charm.

The sculptural decoration, in contradistinction to that strictly architectural, equally abounds. By sculptural decoration is meant that designed as well as executed by the sculptor, and in regard to which the only care of the architect is to provide places for it, and so to frame it that, if it does not help, it may not injure, the architecture to which it is attached. It is not too much to say of this that it is much the most important and interesting work in decorative sculpture which is to be seen out-of-doors in New York. The most noteworthy piece of it, perhaps, is the procession of cherubic musicians girdling the frieze-like band of the corbel which carries the oriel of the southern front.* The execution elsewhere, in the panels under and between the windows, and in the pilasters of the bay, is equally good, but the design is nowhere else so effective. One need not be a purist, indeed, to find fault with the introduction of these pilasters at the angles of the bay and on the curve of the oriel, which are so clearly not structural members, actual or symbolic, and which are so clearly introduced for the sake of the ornament they bear, although he may condone the fault for the prettiness of the ornament generally in design, and its unfailing care and delicacy of execution. The only criticism possible, indeed, upon the execution of this work is, that it is too exquisite, and reduces the texture of carved stone too nearly to the more facile surface of moulded clay.

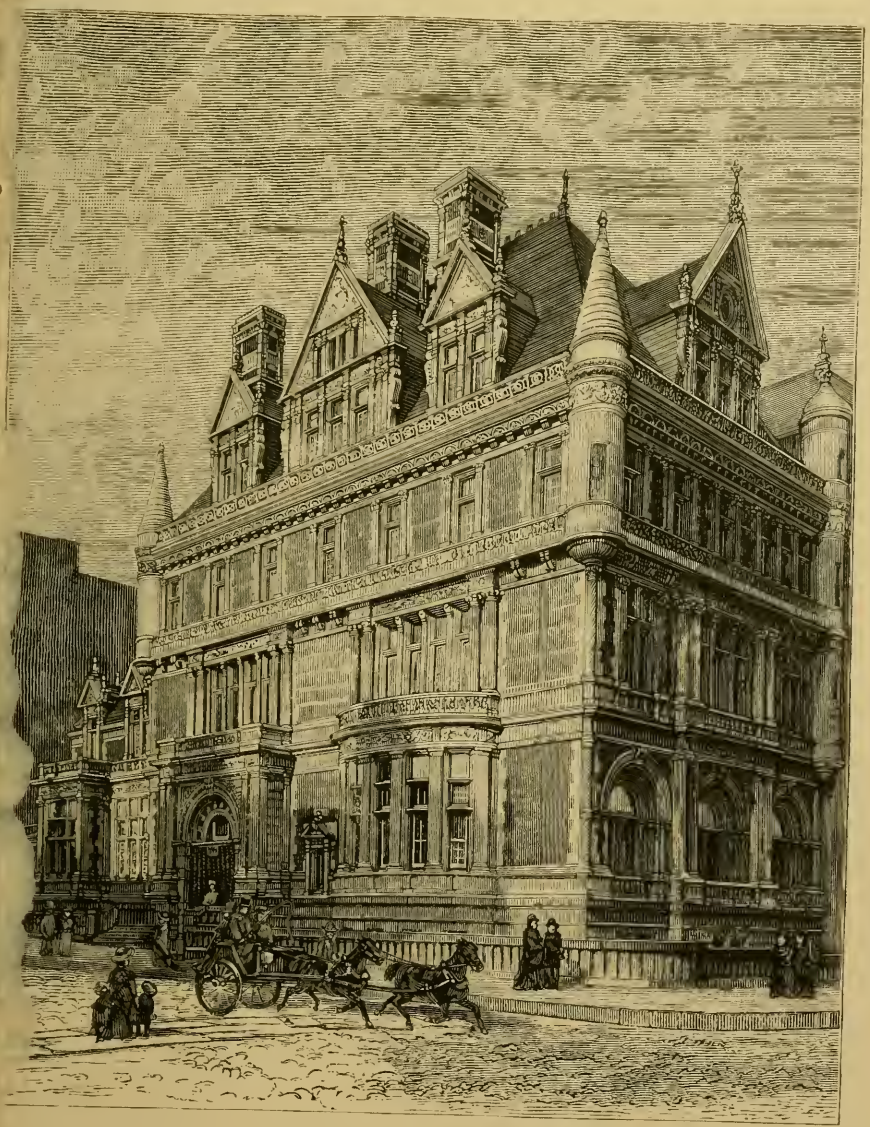
One's admiration of Mr. Hunt's spirited and scholarly design does not indeed cease with the walls of the house; but it must be owned that it undergoes some modification above the cornice. It cannot be said that the skyline is so effective as might have been expected from what is beneath it. There is an undeniable piquancy

* See illustration, page 39.

about the statued gable which terminates the roof of the principal mass, and the relation between this roof and the steep hood of the turret is picturesque, taken alone. Unfortunately, it cannot be taken alone, and the effect of the whole series of roofs is not a harmonious grouping, but—there is no other word for it—a "huddle." It is in the roof, too, that the shortcomings of the architect in the solution of what may be called his academic problem are most apparent. The style of his work is the transitional style of France, the modification of mediæval architecture under the influence of the Italian Renaissance, until what was all Gothic at the beginning of the transition had become all classic at its close. This is, in fact, an attempt to summarize in one building the history of a most active and fruitful century in the history of architecture, which included the late Gothic of the fifteenth century and the early Renaissance of the sixteenth, and spanned the distance from the minute and complicated modelling of the Palais de Justice at Rouen and the Hôtel Cluny at Paris, to the romantic classicism of the great châteaux of the Loire. Certainly the attempt does not lack boldness. Here we have in one building the superimposed bases and interpenetrating mouldings of the latest French Gothic and the fish-bladder tracery of the Renaissance, and in the dormers the stride from the ogee canopies of Rouen to the prim pilasters and pediment of Orleans. Mr. Hunt's skill has not sufficed to introduce together these features, the outcomes of different modes of thought as well as of different systems of construction, without a visible incongruity; nor are they in all cases successful, taken singly. The large and elaborate dormer over the entrance, especially, instead of being a visible reconciliation of the two styles, is a visible demonstration that they cannot be recon-

ciled. A complete construction of post and lintel, of pilaster and entablature, is supplemented by another construction of flying buttresses which are clearly superfluous and irrelevant, and which, instead of resisting the thrust of an arch, have the appearance of ineffectually "shoring up" a structure which, though complete, is unstable.

One is inclined to ascribe the lack of unity and repose which the disturbed sky-line of the building entails upon it, and which somewhat impairs the dignity of an otherwise dignified and always animated design, to the angle turret of which the architect was evidently enamoured. We may share his liking for it, and admit it to be an extremely pretty thing, without admitting that it belongs to this building. The leading motive of the composition is evidently the "pyramidization," to borrow Mr. Thomas Hope's uncouth word, of the whole building towards the apex of the main mass at the angle, from the point of view from which the illustration is taken. It is clearly to assist and emphasize the ascent and convergence of all the lines of the building to this apex, and to enhance the apparent dimensions, that this mass is raised a story, and the extremities of the building allowed to fall away, and it is in order to account for the emphasizing of this mass by a separate roof that the somewhat awkward expedient has been adopted of dropping the cornice on the street side below the eaves. New York readers who are familiar with the aspect of the Dry Dock Savings-Bank in the Bowery will know what is meant by this "pyramidization," and will remember how it is there attained. Now it happens that it is precisely this intention which in the present instance is obscured and partly defeated by the tormenting of the sky-line, which in turn may be traced to the insistence of the architect upon his extremely pretty but irrele-

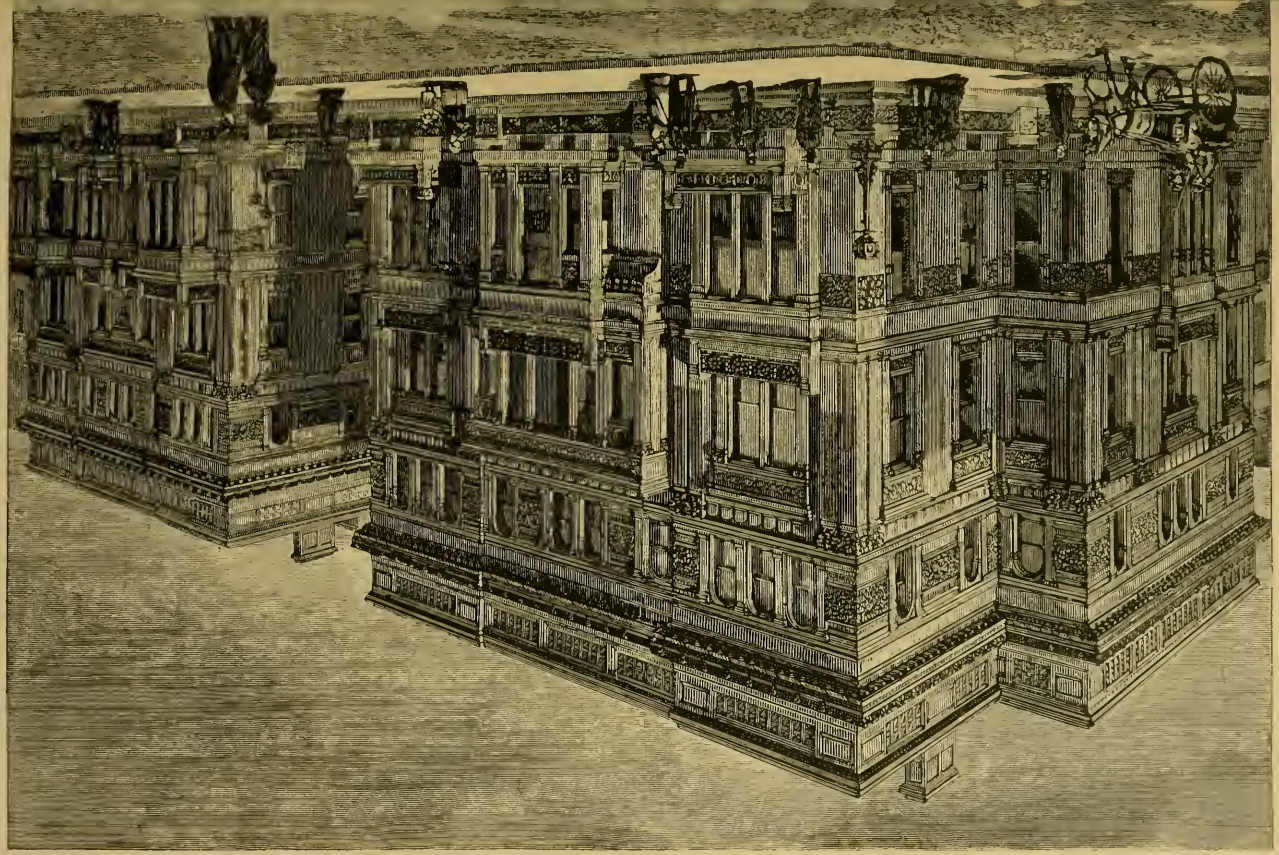


HOUSE OF CORNELIUS VANDERBILT.
George B. Post, Architect.

vant turret. It is a good lesson in architecture to find that the effect of a whole may be so much impaired by one of the most successful of the parts, and that even when "the thing" is really rich and rare, we may still be unsatisfied how it "got there." Happily neither this shortcoming, nor shortcomings much graver, could prevent such a work as this from being an ornament to the city, and an honorable monument to its architect.

Perhaps it is because Mr. Post, the architect of the house of Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt, has not attempted so much as Mr. Hunt that his work may be called at once more successful and less interesting. In color it has more and in design less of variety. For the monotony of gray wall and black roof it substitutes red brick, with wrought work of the same gray limestone employed in the house we have been talking of, and with a red slated roof broken by great stone dormers. It is much more simple and compact in composition than the other, for the main house is a parallelogram brought together under one great four-hipped roof, and the wing is here a very subordinate appendage. It is thus much simpler, much more within the conventional decorum of a town mansion in its scheme, while it is equally far from having the appearance of having been designed by contract, and is studied with equal thoroughness, although with a very different motive. In the matter of color, it is undeniable that the brick-work has in places a patchy look by reason of the comparatively small quantities in which it is used, the whole front on the avenue being virtually of highly wrought stone, and it seems clear that the building would have gained if the brick had been omitted altogether from this front. On the street front the mode of treatment adopted might very possibly

have made the building dull and monotonous if it had been built in monochrome, as assuredly the addition of a strong contrast of color would have made the more varied design of the other painfully restless. In style the two buildings offer a curious resemblance and a curious contrast. This also is a French château, but a French château of the period after the transition, when all detail had been thoroughly classicized, and only a romantic wilfulness and freedom of composition recalled the architecture of the Middle Ages. Here are the shell frieze of Blois and the fish-bladder tracery of Orleans, without the Gothic detail which in the French Renaissance is so often found side by side with them. The carving here, equally well executed for its purpose, does not appeal so much to admiration for its execution, for the reason that it is all strictly architectural, and not directly imitative. In design it is for its purpose equally well studied; in scale, indeed, is much better studied, so that the detail, which is often lost in the ineffectual minuteness of the carving in the former case, here takes its place with emphasis. Perhaps in some instances it takes its place with too much emphasis, as in the modelling of the arches of the first floor; while, on the other hand, there is a clear lack of vigor in the brackets which carry the balcony of the third story, and in the treatment of the spiral shaft upon which rests the corbelled turret at the outer angle. But these defects of design seem to be quite deliberate, and it seems, upon the whole, that the building looks as the architect intended it to look, in a more accurate sense than can be said of its competitor. The leading motive of composition in that was the "pyramidization" at the angle. The leading motive of this may be assigned to the development of the floor lines. The perpendicular lines are entirely subordi-

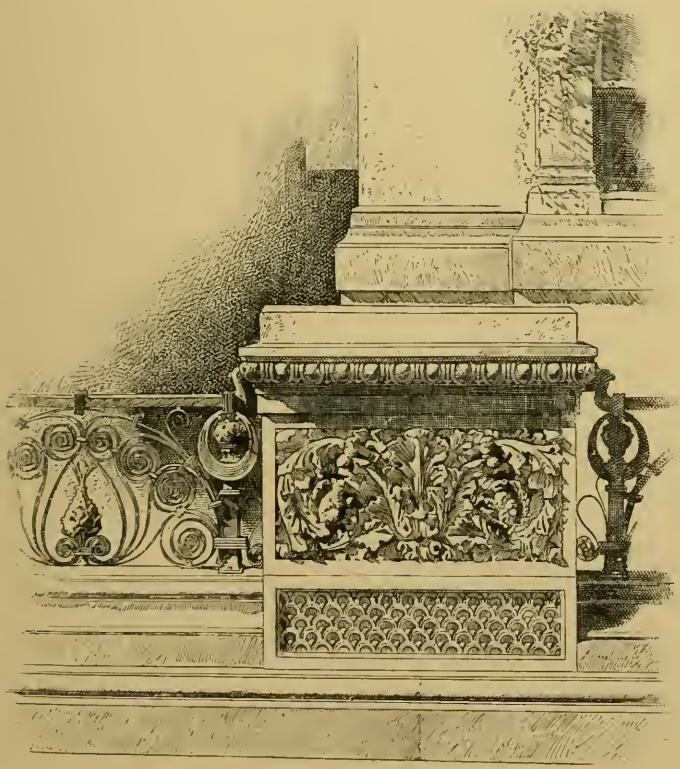


nated to these—so far subordinated, indeed, that the axial lines of the openings in the lower stories are disregarded in the upper—and the horizontal lines are wrought by modelling and decoration into emphatic belts, graduated in richness from the simple basement course to the very rich and elaborate cornice. We may say here, too, that our admiration grows fainter above this line; for the exaggerated dormers, excessive as dormers and inadequate as gables, are the least successful features of the building, while in their decoration, alone in the building, constructive propriety is abandoned. But the great and simple roof certainly prevents the building from straggling, as its neighbor tends to do, while the angle turrets at its base not only relieve its outline of monotonous heaviness, but are clever expedients for stopping the lines of its angles. Upon the whole, one may say of Mr. Post's design that it is a thoroughly workmanlike piece of work, and may even find less fault with it than with the more ambitious work of Mr. Hunt; though, indeed, he may ascribe this to his belief that there is less in it to talk about or to think about.

Between either of these and the brown-stone houses which have been built for Mr. William H. Vanderbilt, after the designs of Messrs. Herter, the decorators, a wide architectural gulf is fixed. We found a leading motive in each of the others; but what leading motive, or, indeed, what subordinate motive, of an architectural kind, can be found here? There is indeed no development of lines or of masses, and no organized relation of parts is aimed at. The openings are not grouped or spaced so as to tell the story of the interior, nor so as to bear any reference to each other, nor are the structural features which every building must possess brought out by modelling; nor is the ornament applied

to accentuate the structural features, nor is it designed with reference either to its place or to its function as ornament. The fluted pilasters of the second story seem to be meant, indeed, to re-enforce the angles of the projecting portions of the wall. But this intention is abandoned in the first and in the third stories, in which a belt of carved foliage is run to the angles of the wall, without reference to the lines of the pilasters. This foliage is in workmanship as careful as possible—as careful, indeed, as the carving in either of the architectural works which we have been discussing. Yet its perfection gives no pleasure to the spectator, for the simple reason that it has nothing to do with the building in the walls of which it is cut. Much of the detail is carefully designed, but the absence of a general design makes it ineffective. Except for the refinement of some of this detail, the building would be as vacant of architectural interest as any work of our architectural period of darkness. The Stewart mansion does not interest students of architecture; but the Stewart mansion itself exhibits a nearer approach than these houses to an architectural design, and certainly a coherent design with coarse detail is less depressing, even if it be more irritating, than an entire absence of architectural meaning, with here and there a pretty architectural phrase which in some other context may have meant something. These houses have another misfortune in their very lugubrious color. A vivid piece of painted decoration in the recessed balcony of the nearer is a grateful oasis in the gloomy waste of rubbed sandstone, and some relief to its monotony is also afforded by the gilded railings of the windows at each side of this balcony. But it is to be hoped that courage may be found to let loose a discreet decorator with unlimited gold-leaf upon the whole sad fronts. A mode of decoration

which has been found so effective in the fogs of London might profitably be employed to animate façades which are in no danger of becoming too joyous. It would not be fair to leave these architectural failures, which are in so unpleasant contrast to the encouraging architectural success achieved in the other Vanderbilt houses, without noting one excellent piece of design in the railings which surround them, in which an original, characteristic, and successful treatment of metal has been attained, and which, as works of art, are really of more value than the houses they protect.



POST AND RAILING, W. H. VANDERBILT'S HOUSE.

THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE AS A MONUMENT

THE total length of the bridge is 5989 feet, of which the central span between the towers is 1595 feet 6 inches, the "land spans" from the towers to the anchorages each 930 feet, the approach on the New York side 1562 feet 6 inches, and on the steeper Brooklyn side 971 feet. These dimensions do not make this the longest bridge in the world. But when it was built there was no single span which approached the central span over the East River; and though it has since been exceeded by two spans of the Forth Bridge, in Scotland (1710 feet each, sustained by cantilevers), it remains by far the largest example of a chain-bridge. It is half as long again as Roebling's Cincinnati Bridge (1057 feet between towers), and nearly twice as long as the same engineer's Niagara Bridge (821 feet). The span of the ill-fated bridge over the Ohio at Wheeling, which was built in 1848, and blown down in 1854, was 1010 feet. Noteworthy suspension-bridges in Europe are Telford's, over the Menai Straits (589 feet), finished in 1825; Chaley's bridge, at Fribourg (870 feet), finished in 1834; and Tierney Clark's bridge over the Danube at Pesth (670 feet), finished in 1849. The longest spans bridged otherwise than by a roadway hung from cables are the central spans of Stephenson's Britannia (box girder) Bridge (459 feet), of Eads's St. Louis Bridge, of steel arches (520 feet), and of the beautiful Washington Bridge, of steel

arches, at New York (510 feet). The largest span of an arch of masonry known to have been built in a bridge (251 feet) was in that built in the fourteenth century, and destroyed by Carmagnola in the fifteenth, which crossed the Adda at Trezzo. The largest now standing (220 feet) is an American work, the arch designed and built by General Meigs to carry the Washington Aqueduct over Cabin John Creek. The second is that of the Grosvenor Bridge at Chester (200 feet), and the third the central arch of London Bridge (152 feet).

The Brooklyn Bridge is thus one of the mechanical wonders of the world, one of the greatest and most characteristic of the monuments of the nineteenth century. Its towers, at least, bid fair to outlast every structure of which they command a view. Everybody recalls Macaulay's prophecy of the time "when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand upon a broken arch of London Bridge, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's." But when our New-Zealander takes his stand above the saddles that are now ridden by the cables of the bridge, to look over the site of a forsaken city, there will be no ruins of churches—at least, of churches now in being—for him to sketch or see. The web of woven steel that now hangs between the stark masses of the towers may have disappeared, its slender filaments rusted into nothingness under the slow corrosion of the centuries. Its builders and the generation for which they wrought may have been as long forgotten as are now the builders of the Pyramids, whereof the traveller, "as he paceth amazedly those deserts," asks the Historic Muse "who builded them; and she mumbleth something, but what it is he heareth not." It is not unimaginable that our future archæologist, looking from one of these towers upon the solitude of a mastless river and a dispeopled land,

may have no other means of reconstructing our civilization than that which is furnished him by the tower on which he stands. What will his judgment of us be?

This, or something like this, ought to be a question with every man who builds a structure which is meant to outlast him, whether it be a temple of religion or a work of bare utility like this. It so happens that the work which is likely to be our most durable monument, and to convey some knowledge of us to the most remote posterity, is a work of bare utility; not a shrine, not a fortress, not a palace, but a bridge. This is in itself characteristic of our time. It is true of no other people since the Romans, and of none before. Like the Roman remains, the duration of this work of ours will show that we knew how to build. "A Roman work," we often hear it said of the bridge, and it is in many ways true. It is far beyond any Roman monument in refinement of mechanical skill. It is Roman in its massiveness and durability. It is Roman, too, in its disregard of art, in resting satisfied with the practical solution of the great problem of its builders, without a sign of that skill which would have explained and emphasized the process of construction at every step, and everywhere, in whole and in part, made the structure tell of the work it was doing. There have been periods in history when this æsthetic purpose would have seemed to the builder of such a monument as much a matter of course, as necessary a part of his work, as the practical purpose which animated the designer of the Brooklyn Bridge. It would have seemed so to the engineer of a bridge in Athens in the second century before our era, or to the engineer of a bridge in Western Europe in the thirteenth century of our era. The utilitarian treatment of our monument is as striking and as characteristic a mark of the period as its utilitarian purpose. It is a

noble work of engineering; it is not a work of architecture.

The most strictly scientific of constructors would scarcely take the ground that he did not care how his work looked, when his work was so conspicuous and so durable as the Brooklyn Bridge, and he must be aware that a training in scientific construction alone will not secure an architectural result. It is more probable that he looks upon the current architectural devices as frivolous and irrelevant to the work upon which he is engaged, and consoles himself for his ignorance of them by contempt. Architecture is to him the unintelligent use of building material. Assuredly this view is borne out by a majority of the "architecturesque" buildings that he sees, and he does not lack express authority for it. Whereas the engineer's definition of good masonry is "the least material to perform a certain duty," Mr. Fergusson declares that "an architect ought always to allow himself such a margin of strength that he may disregard or play with his construction;" and Mr. Ruskin defines architecture to be the addition to a building of unnecessary features. An engineer has, therefore, some warrant for considering that he is sacrificing to the graces and doing all that can reasonably be expected of him to produce an architectural monument, if in designing the piers of a chain-bridge he employs an unnecessary amount of material and adds unnecessary features. But if we go back to the time when engineers were artists, and study what a modern scientific writer has described as "that paragon of constructive skill, a Pointed cathedral," we shall find that the architecture and the construction cannot be disjoined. The work of the mediæval builder in his capacity of artist was to expound, emphasize, and refine upon the work he did in his capacity of constructor, and to develop and

heighten its inherent effect. And it is of this kind of skill that the work of the modern engineer, in so far as he is only an engineer, shows no trace.

Reduced to its simplest expression, and as it has actually been used for unknown periods in Asia and in South America, a suspension-bridge consists of two parallel ropes swung from side to side of a ravine, and carrying the platform over which the passenger walks. As the span increases, so that the dip makes the ropes impracticable, the land ends of the ropes are hoisted some distance above the roadway which they carry. If nothing can be found there strong enough to hold them, they are simply passed over, say, forked trees, and the ends made fast to other trees or held down with stones. This is the essential construction of the Brooklyn Bridge. The ropes become four cables sixteen inches thick, of 5541 steel wires; the forked tree becomes a tower 276 feet high, and 8260 square feet in area at the base; the bowlder to hold down the end of the rope becomes a mass of masonry of 60,000 tons' weight; the shaky platform becomes a great street, 85 feet wide, of five firm roadways. But the man who first carried his rope over the forked tree was the inventor of the arrangement which, developed through all the refinements of modern mechanics, forms the groundwork of the Brooklyn Bridge.

This statement of the germinal idea of a chain-bridge will, perhaps, give a clearer notion of the functions of the several parts of the Brooklyn Bridge than a consideration of the complicated structure in its ultimate evolution, in which these functions are partly lost sight of, But if the structure had been architecturally designed. these things would have been emphasized at every point and in every way. The function of the great "towers," so called, being merely to hold up the cables, it is plain that three isolated piers would have performed that func-

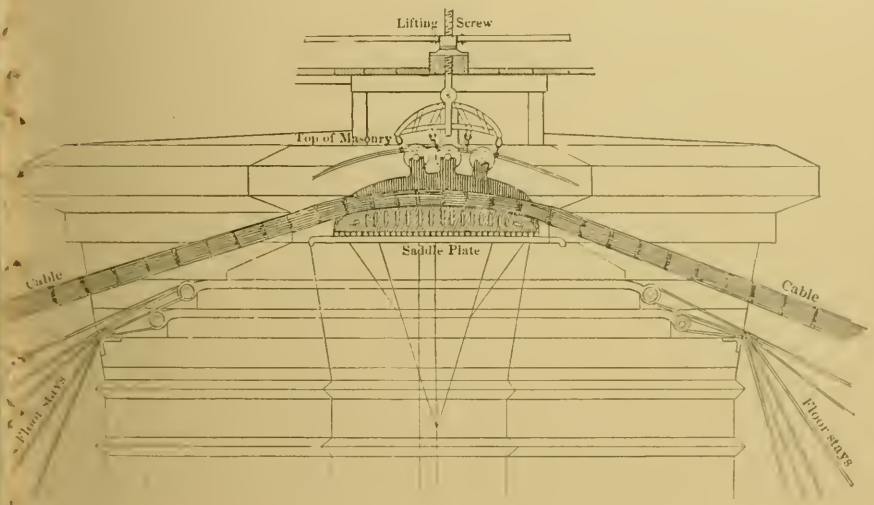
tion, and the stability of these piers, loaded as they are by the cables, would very possibly have been assured, even if they had been completely detached from each other. But in order at once to stiffen and to load them, so as to make the area of resistance to the force of the wind equal to the whole area of the towers, the openings through which the roadways run are closed above

BRIDGE AT MINNEAPOLIS.
Thomas M. Griffith, Engineer.

by steep pointed arches, and the spandrels of these filled with a wall which rises to the summit of the piers, where a flat coping covers the whole. There is a woful lack of expression in this arrangement. The piers should assert themselves starkly and unmistakably as the bones of the structure, and the wall above the arches be subordinated to a mere filling. It should be distinctly withdrawn from the face of the piers instead of being, as in fact it is, only distinguished from them by their shallow and ineffectual projections. It should be distinctly dropped below their summits instead of rising to the same height, and being included under a common cornice. To see what a difference in effect this very obvious differentiation of parts would have made, glance at the sketch of a suspension-bridge at Minneapolis. This is not, upon the whole, a laudable design, and it contains several survivals of conventional architectural forms meaningless in their present place. But the mere subduing of the archway to a strut between the piers explains—not forcibly, perhaps, nor elegantly, but unmistakably—the main purpose of the structure, and the functional relation of its parts. A drawing of one of the towers of the Brooklyn Bridge without its cables would tell the spectator nothing; the structure itself will tell our New-Zealander nothing of its uses. With its flat top and its level coping, indicating that the whole was meant to be evenly loaded, it would seem to be the base of a missing superstructure rather than what it is.

The flatness of the top alone conceals instead of expressing the structure. It is of the first practical necessity that the great cables should move freely in their saddles, so as always to keep the pressure upon the piers directly vertical, and very ingenious appliances have been employed to attain this end, and to avoid chafing the cables. But the design of the piers them-

selves tells us absolutely nothing of all this. The cable simply disappears on one side and reappears on the other, as if it were two separate cables, one on each side, instead of one continuous chain. Look at this section of the top of the tower, and see how an exquisite refinement of mechanical arrangement may coexist with absolute insensibility to the desirableness even of an architectural expression of this arrangement. The architecture of this crowning member of the tower has nothing



whatever to do with the purpose for which the structure exists. Is it not perfectly evident that an architectural expression of this mechanical arrangement would require that the line of the summit, instead of this meaningless flat coping, should, to begin with, be a crest of roof, its double slope following the line of the cable which it shelters? Here the very channel through which the cable runs is not designed, but is a mere hole occurring casually, and not by premeditation, in the midst of the mould-

ings which form the cornice of the tower. This is architectural barbarism.

Other opportunities offered for architectural expression in the towers themselves were in the treatment of the buttresses, in the treatment of the balconies which girdle the tower at the height of the roadway, and in the modelling of the arches. The girth of each of the towers at the water-line is 398 feet. At the roof-course it is 378 feet. The reduction is effected by means of five or six offsets, which withdraw each face of the tower four feet between the bottom and the top, and each end six feet. The counter-forts, eight in all, on the sides of the outer piers and on the faces of all the piers, are mere applied strips, very shallow in proportion to their width, and terminating in the capital-like projections which are casually pierced to receive the cables. It may make, perhaps, no serious difference in the mechanical efficiency of these counter-forts whether their area be narrow and deep or broad and shallow. But an increase of depth in proportion to width would of itself, with its higher lights and sharper shadows, have made forcible masses of what are now ineffectual features. This inherent effect would be very greatly enhanced if the offsets themselves were accentuated by sharp and decisive modelling. As it is, emphasis seems to have been studiously avoided. The offsets are merely long batterings of the wall, which do nothing to separate the piers into related parts with definite transitions, and so to refine the crudity of the masses. To see the difference between a mechanical and a monumental conception of a great structure, compare these towers with the front of Amiens, or of Strasburg, or of Notre Dame of Paris. Of course the designer of a modern bridge must not attempt to reproduce in his work "those misty masses of multitudinous pinnacle and diademed tower." That

would be a more fatal fault than the rudeness and crudeness with which we have to charge the design of the towers of the Brooklyn Bridge. The ornament of the cathedrals, so far as it is separable from their structure, has nothing for the designer of the bridge even of suggestion. But to see how masses may be modelled so as to be made to speak, look at the modelled masses of the tower of Amiens, the stark lines of essential structure framing the screen of wall between them, in contrast with the uniform deadness here of buttress and curtain wall; the crisp emphasis of lines of light and hollows of black shade which mark the transitions between parts of structure in the west front of Rheims, in contrast with the lack of emphasis in the offsets of the bridge tower; the spirit of the gargoyled balconies that belt the towers of Notre Dame, and the spiritlessness of the parapeted balconies that encircle the tower of the bridge. And note, too (we are not now speaking of the decoration of the cathedrals), that all this transcendent superiority arises merely from a development and emphasis of the inherent expression of the masses themselves, which in the bridge are left so crude, and in the cathedral towers are refined so far. It need not, and indeed should not, have been carried so far in this architecture of reason and utility as in the architecture of a poetical religion. The mere rudiments of those works would have furnished all the expression that is necessary or desirable here. But these rudiments are wanting. What can we say but that the designer of the cathedral began where the designer of the bridge left off? If our New-Zealander should extend his travels, and come upon these monuments also, what would be his surprise at finding documentary proof that the bridge was built six hundred years after the cathedrals, and that the generation which built the bridge looked backward and down-

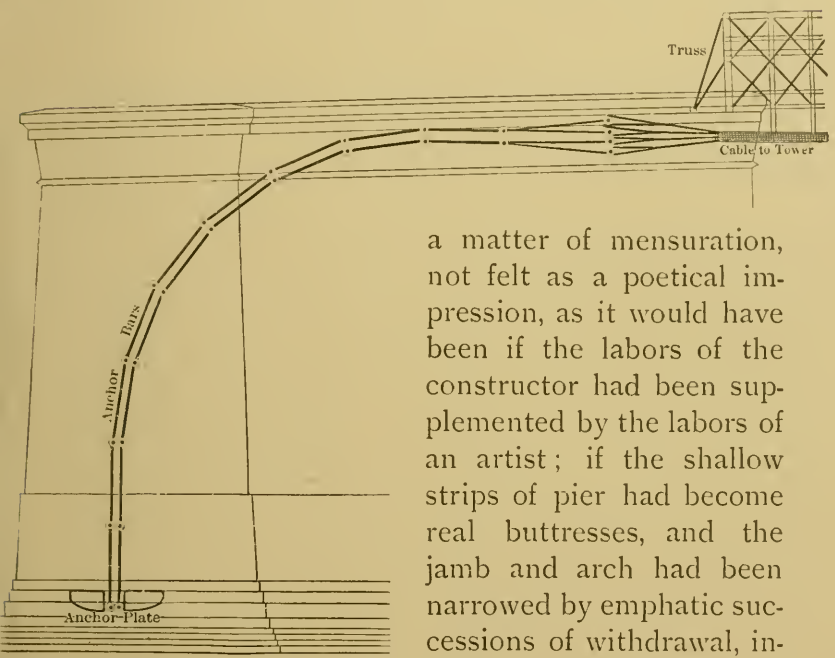
ward upon the generation which built the cathedrals as rude and barbarous and unreasoning in comparison with themselves!

What we have said of the towers is true also of the anchorages. The bowlder which the Peruvian rolls upon the end of his rope to hold it down is here a mass of 60,000 tons. Scientifically it is adjusted to its purpose, no doubt, with the most exact nicety. Artistically it is still but a bowlder rolled upon a rope. It would probably be impracticable to exhibit the anchor plate which takes the ultimate strain of this mile and more of cable, though we may be sure that our Greek or our Gothic bridge-builder would not have admitted its impracticability without as exhaustive an investigation as the modern bridge-builder has given to the mechanical aspects of his problem. But it was certainly practicable to indicate the function of the anchorage itself, to build it up in masses which should seem to hold the cable to the earth, or a double arch like—or rather unlike—the double arch of the main tower, turned between piers which should visibly answer the same purpose. Instead of either of these, or of any technical device for the same purpose, the weight above is a crude mass, so far from being adapted to its function in its form, that one has to look with some care to find it from the street below, and to distinguish it from the approaches.

What we have called the balconies at the level of the roadway are not "practical" balconies, since they open from the driveways, and not from the walk, and are not accessible as points of view. The purpose of a projection at this point is to secure as great a breadth as possible for the system of wind-braces under the floor of the bridge. This purpose is attained by the projection, but is only masked by the imitations of balconies, instead of being architecturally expressed, as it might have been

unmistakably expressed, by the bold projection of a granite spur from the angle of the pier.

There are, probably, few arches in the world—certainly there can be none outside of works of modern engineering—of anything like the span, height, thickness, and conspicuousness of those in the bridge towers which are so little effective. Like the brute mass of wall above them, they are impressive only by magnitude. The great depth of the archway is only seen as a matter of mensuration, not felt as a poetical impression, as it would have been if the labors of the constructor had been supplemented by the labors of an artist; if the shallow strips of pier had become real buttresses, and the jamb and arch had been narrowed by emphatic successions of withdrawal, instead of being merely tunnelled through the mass; if the intrados of the arch itself had been accentuated by modelling, instead of being weakened by the actual recession of its voussoirs behind the plane of the wall.



SECTION OF TOP AND BACK OF ANCHORAGE.
(SIDE VIEW.)

The approaches themselves are greatly impressive, as

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indeed the towers are also, by magnitude and massiveness. The street bridges are uniformly imposing by size and span, and especially attractive also by reason of the fact that through them we get what is to be got nowhere else in our rectangular city, glimpses and "bits" of buildings. The most successful of them all, and the most successful feature architecturally of all the masonry of the bridge, is the simple, massive, and low bridge of two arches which spans North William Street, in New York. The arcades between the streets are imposing by number and repetition as well as by massiveness, and by the Roman durability which marks all the work. They suffer, however, from two causes. The coping, the arches, and the piers, which are the emphatic parts of structure, are lighter in color than the unemphasized and rock-faced fields of the wall, and this is always a misfortune when it is not an error. The arches are of the form called "Florentine"—that is to say, round within and pointed without. The deepest voussoirs are thus those at the crown of the arch. This is the reverse of the disposition which would be dictated by mechanical considerations alone. Architecturally it has the drawback of interrupting at every arch the successive and diminishing wheelings which make a long arcade of great openings so impressive in a perspective view. The form seems to have been chosen on account of the facility it afforded, by lengthening the upper voussoirs, to conform the ridge line of the arches to the slope of the roadway, while keeping the springing line horizontal. This gradual diminution of the arches shoreward enhances the apparent length of the approach looking in that direction, but correspondingly shortens it looking towards the bridge; and it seems, upon the whole, that it would have been better to carry the arches through level, without attempting to dissemble the difference

between their line and that of the roadway. There are some shabby and flimsy details of iron work, which mar the monumental effect of the great roadway itself, while the design of the iron stations at either end is grossly illiterate, and discreditable to the great work. Imitations in cast iron of stone capitals surmount and emphatically contradict posts profusely studded with bolt-heads; and other solecisms, alike against constructional reason and architectural tradition, are rife in these unfortunate edifices, which do what they can to vulgarize the great structure to which they give access.

Vulgarity certainly cannot be charged against any integral portion of the great work itself. There is nothing frivolous and nothing ostentatious even in the details which we have noted, and in which we have not been so much criticising the crowning work of a great engineer's career as noting the spirit of our age. It is scarcely fair to say, even, as was said by an architectural journal when the completion of the bridge was doubtful, that if it were left incomplete its towers would stand "in unnecessary ugliness." Its defects in design are not misdeeds, but shortcomings. They are the defects of being rudimentary, of not being completely developed. The anatomy of the towers and of the anchorages is not brought out in their modelling. Their fingers, so to speak, are all thumbs. Their impressiveness is inherent in their mass, and is what it could not help being. The ugliest of great bridges is undoubtedly Stephenson's Britannia Bridge; and this is ugly, not because it is square and straight, but because it tells nothing of itself. It is a mere flat surface, and almost absolutely inexpressive, compared, for example, with such a piece of ironwork as the truss which carries the roadway of the bridge over Franklin Square, in which the function of every joint and member is apparent. But a far nobler thing

than this is the central span of the great bridge itself, its roadway slowly sweeping upward to meet the swift swoop of its cables. We have complained of the lack of expression in the towers of their anatomy, but this is anatomy only, a skeletonized structure in which, as in a scientific diagram, we see—even the layman sees—the interplay of forces represented by an abstraction of lines. What monument of any architecture can speak its story more clearly and more forcibly than this gossamer architecture, through which its purpose, like "the spider's touch"—

> "So exquisitely fine,
> Feels at each thread, and lives along the line"?

This aerial bow, as it hangs between the busy cities, "curving on a sky imbrued with color," is perfect as an organism of nature. It is an organism of nature. There was no question in the mind of its designer of "good taste" or of appearance. He learned the law that struck its curves, the law that fixed the strength and the relation of its parts, and he applied the law. His work is beautiful, as the work of a ship-builder is unfailingly beautiful in the forms and outlines in which he is only studying "what the water likes," without a thought of beauty, and as it is almost unfailingly ugly when he does what he likes for the sake of beauty. The designer of the Brooklyn Bridge has made a beautiful structure out of an exquisite refinement of utility, in a work in which the lines of forces constitute the structure. Where a more massive material forbade him to skeletonize the structure, and the lines of effort and resistance needed to be brought out by modelling, he has failed to bring them out, and his structure is only as impressive as it needs must be. It has not helped his work, as we have seen, to trust his own sense of beauty, and to contradict or to conceal what he was doing in accordance with its dic-

tates. As little would it have helped him to invoke the aid of a commonplace architect to plaster his structure with triglyphs or to indent it with trefoils. But an architect who pursued his calling in the spirit and with the skill of the mediæval builders of whom we have been speaking, who knew in his province the lesson the engineer has re-enforced in his, that "Nature can only be commanded by obeying her," and that the function of an organism, in art as in nature, must determine its form—such an architect might have helped the designer of the Brooklyn Bridge to make it one of the noblest monuments of architecture in the world, as it is one of the greatest and most honorable works of engineering.

AN AMERICAN CATHEDRAL

I

THE saying that ours is not a cathedral-building age is so obviously true, and so familiar, that the proposal to erect in New York the most important religious monument on this side of the Atlantic strikes many, and perhaps most, cultivated persons with a sense of incongruity. It is so especially true that this is not a cathedral-building country that an American cathedral seems a violation of the unities in place not less than in time—an anatopism as well as an anachronism. It is a reflection calculated to give us pause that even while we were considering what should be the character of an American cathedral in the city of New York, the Assembly of the State, being in possession of what was acclaimed at the time of its opening as "the most monumental interior in this country," should have decided to demolish rather than to restore its most monumental feature, and should have been hopelessly vulgarizing it by substituting for its stone-work a system of iron posts veneered with wood. and of beams enclosing panels of papier-maché, without eliciting any general or effective protest.

The very marked increase of interest in the art of architecture in this country within the last few years has been accompanied by a corresponding advance in the practice of that art, but it has scarcely as yet pro-

duced any manifestations that can be called monumental. Our monuments, like those of the Romans, are the works of engineers, and not of architects. In fact, the disproportion in magnitude and in interest between the Roman baths and aqueducts and the Roman temples is exaggerated in the relation between our works of utility and our works of art. Our engineers stand ready to span wider openings and to rear loftier structures than were ever bridged or raised before, provided anybody can be convinced that these unprecedented operations will "pay." The result of their labors, on the æsthetic side, is fairly summed up in the remark of a recent European visitor that public works in America are executed without reference to art.

But, as Bishop Potter pointed out in the admirable letter in which he promulgated the project of an American cathedral, this very prevalence and predominance of the utilitarian spirit makes it most desirable that there should be a conspicuous counteraction and an impressive reminder, in a great commercial town, that there are other than commercial interests and other than physical needs. A "metropolitan" church, in the modern sense of the adjective, dominating the more prosaic erections of a city, as a cathedral must do if reared upon the noble site secured for the Cathedral of New York, is the conversion into a beacon of Mr. Ruskin's "lamp of sacrifice." It belongs to its function that it could not by any conceivable possibility "pay," and that it should be, first of all, a religious monument. There is some danger that this may be forgotten, for in the design of ordinary churches, in which the architects who have been working at the problem presented by the cathedral are commonly exercised, they feel at every turn the pressure of the utilitarian spirit. They are required to "accommo-

date" a congregation, in most cases at a minimum of cost, so that the preacher may be well seen and heard of all. The muses of acoustics, ventilation, and sanitary plumbing preside over their labors, necessarily to the greater or less detriment of architecture. The features that give dignity to the minsters of the Middle Ages are apt to be obstructive of the comfort of the congregation. If a cathedral were to be merely or mainly a huge auditorium, nearly all the traditions of ecclesiastical architecture would have to be sacrificed. Doubtless, in a true cathedral of such dimensions as those contemplated for the Cathedral of New York, an ample space for preaching must accrue. But a building in which this space is the object of the design can scarcely become a cathedral. Mr. R. L. Stevenson, considering the apse of Noyon, observes: "I could never fathom how any man dares to lift up his voice in a cathedral. What has he to say that will not be an anticlimax? For though I have heard a considerable variety of sermons, I never yet heard one that was so expressive as a cathedral. 'Tis the best preacher itself, and preaches day and night, not only telling you of man's art and aspirations in the past, but convicting your own soul of ardent sympathies." At all events, a cathedral is much more and other than a place to preach in. If that alone were its purpose, it would be best fulfilled by an enclosed and unobstructed space, extending to the limits of the carrying power of the human voice. But such an erection would resemble a mediæval cathedral much less than it would resemble a modern rink.

In truth, the justification of a modern and Protestant cathedral is not to be looked for in its "usefulness." The altar, and not the pulpit, is the centre and culmination of its interior design, as it can scarcely be said

WEST ELEVATION.

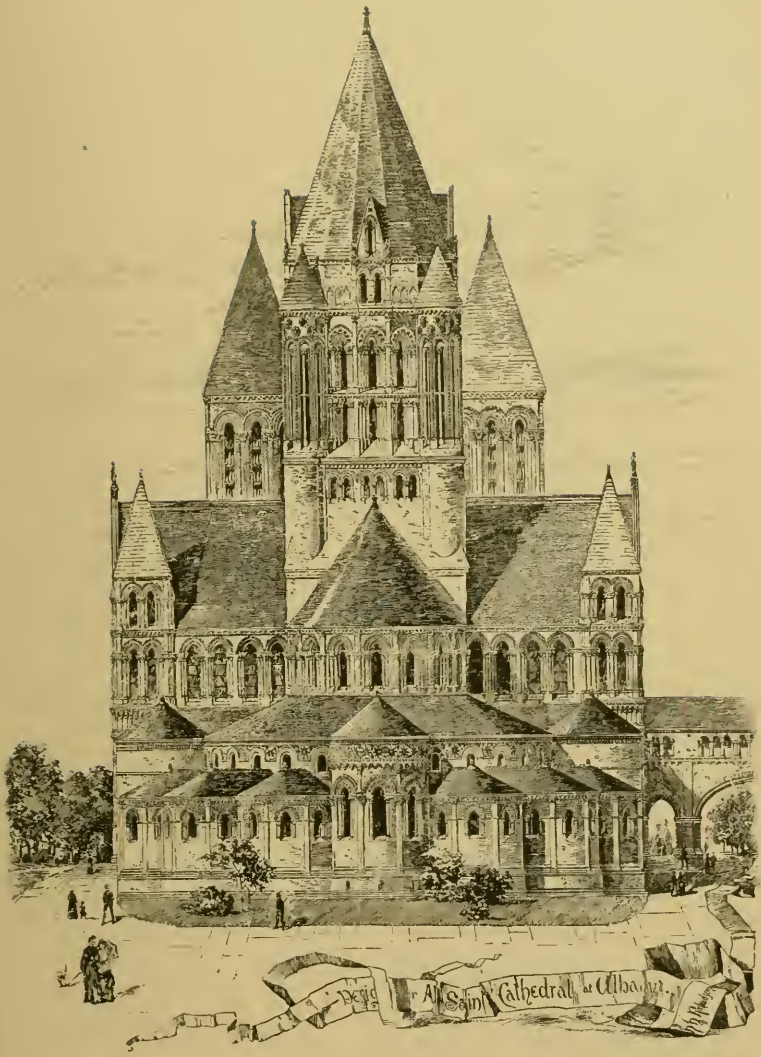
to be the centre of "congregational worship." The old cathedrals are most admirably adapted to be the theatres of ecclesiastical processions and pageants; and although the Episcopal Church has a more highly developed ritual than any other Protestant body, it does not provide for these on a cathedral scale. The Church of England cannot be said really to employ the minsters it has inherited. An eminent architect, who was not only an Englishman, but an "Anglo-Catholic," was compelled to describe an ancient cathedral in its modern English use as merely "a museum of antiquities, with a free sacred concert on Sunday." Even among Catholic countries Spain is almost, if not quite, alone in fully using her mediæval cathedrals as modern churches of the people, instead of secluding them as "historical monuments" from the ordinary life of the nation. In a country in which the arts of reading and writing have been acquired by but a small fraction of the people, the saying of Victor Hugo cannot have come true. The book has not destroyed the church, and the invention of printing has not affected either the spirit or the form of devotion. The dramatic and spectacular instinct, so strong among the Southern nations, and among the English-speaking peoples perhaps weaker than anywhere else, has found natural vent, in a country in which the type of religion has remained mediæval, in those gorgeous ceremonials, addressed to the imagination and not to the intellect, which really require and employ the stage and the scenery of a mediæval cathedral. Not York or Salisbury, not Cologne or Strasburg, not Rheims or Amiens, hardly Milan or St. Peter's itself, so fully shows to our generation the popular need which the mediæval minsters were meant to answer as it is shown to travellers on one of the great feasts of the Church in Toledo or Sev-

ille. The tardy completion of Cologne under the auspices of a Protestant emperor, and by the contributions of Protestant Germany, not as any longer the temple of the national faith, but as an architectural monument of which the German people have reason to be proud, and the completion of which is a monument also of the union of Germany, more fitly represents the modern attitude of mind respecting cathedrals.

An American Protestant church nearly as long as Cologne (and such is the dimension proposed for the Cathedral of New York) is obviously far beyond the limits of a convenient auditorium, and beyond the ritual requirements of the Episcopal Church. In such a structure the space occupied by the largest congregation that can be assembled within the sound of a single voice is but a fragment, and such a congregation itself but an incident, to be recognized and provided for, indeed, but by no means to be allowed to become the chief object of design. But the aim of these remarks has been to show that it is by its success as an architectural monument that the cathedral must be justified, if it is to be justified at all. In this point of view the very excess, which in any utilitarian point of view is wasteful, becomes an element of impressiveness as being an emphatic rejection in a building erected to the glory of God, of "the nicely calculated less or more" that is suitable and inevitable to buildings erected primarily for the use of man.

II

Mr. Richardson's design for the Cathedral of All-Saints at Albany is herewith so fully illustrated as to enable the architect to estimate the effect the interior would have had in execution, and the untrained reader to form an impression of the exterior effect, which, how-



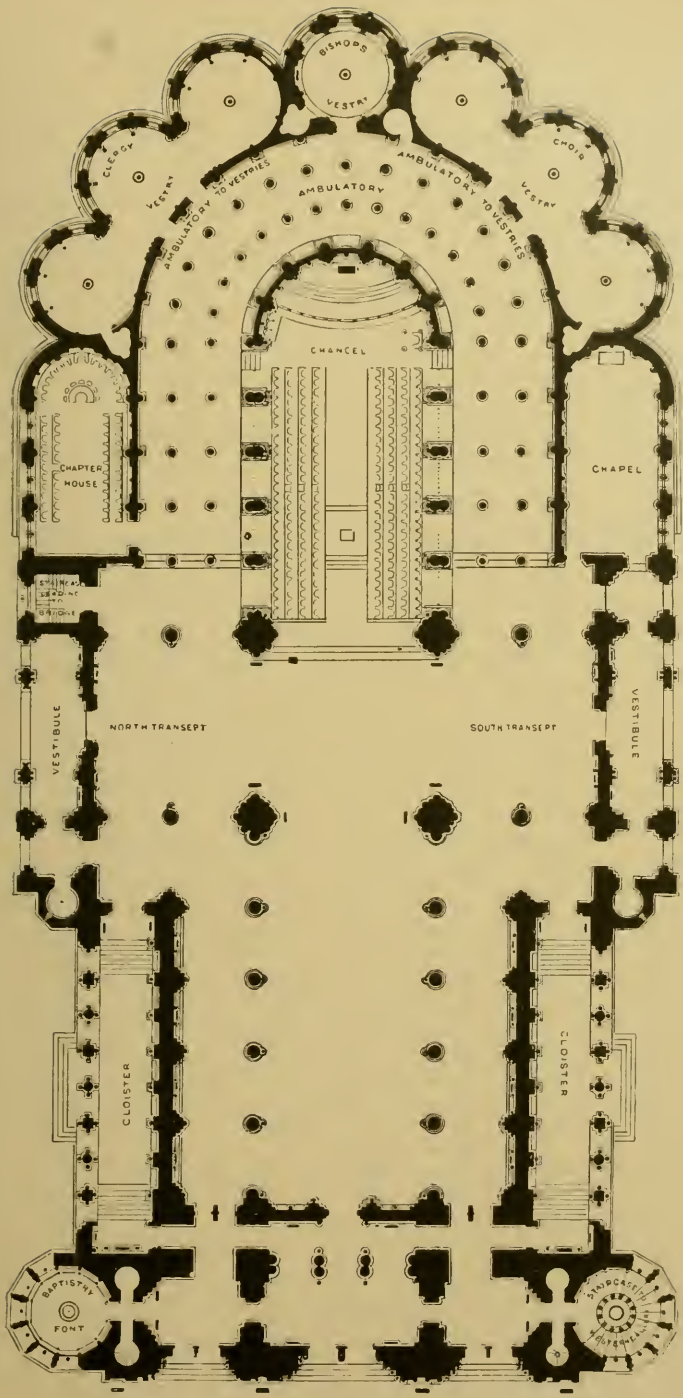
EAST ELEVATION.

ever incomplete, can scarcely be misleading. The design is, perhaps, the most suggestive contribution that has thus far been made to the solution of the architectural problem of a modern cathedral which the diocese of New York has undertaken. At all events, the influence of it was more easy to be traced in the designs for that work than the influence of any building actually erected on this side of the ocean. In part this was due to the merits of the design itself; in part to the immense vigor and large picturesqueness of the executed works of its author—qualities that have so impressed themselves upon the younger generation of American architects that there is scarcely a contemporary work of importance that does not betray his influence, and that the Provençal Romanesque, in which his personal power of design was manifested, may already be said almost to have become the style of the country. It must be manifest, however, that it would be an injustice to Mr. Richardson's memory to take his design for the Albany Cathedral as his contribution to the civic—one may almost say the national—problem of the present. For this design was prepared under rigid limitations of space and of cost; and though its rejection is said to have been due to its excess of these latter, it is by no means what its author would have devised for a project in which there is no limitation. The Cathedral of All-Saints was to be rather a parish church of unusual dimensions than a cathedral; and the dimensions were still so restricted, and "seating capacity" still so important, that the accommodation of the congregation became a main object rather than an incident of the plan from which the structure proceeds.

Without reference to its scale, the design for the Cathedral of Albany confesses the limitations that have

been relaxed for the Cathedral of New York, and that render it unavailable as a direct model. These appear mainly in the interior, but, as we shall presently see, they affect the exterior design as well. As it was in the beginnings of the art of building, so now stone remains the material of monumental structures. In durability it is rivalled, if it be rivalled, by metal alone, and such experiments as the flèche of Rouen and the tower of Paris have not yet convinced mankind of the possibility of a monumental metallic architecture. Timber remains the most acceptable substitute, but timber in a cathedral is plainly a substitute, and monumental architecture admits no substitutes in the structure of a great building. A stone ceiling must be regarded as an indispensable requisite of a true cathedral; and although very impressive and noble cathedrals still exhibit wooden ceilings, they so far come short of fulfilling the idea of a cathedral, and the antiquarians are pretty well agreed that the purpose of the builders was to make their ceilings as durable as their walls, and that they failed to carry out their purpose either through lack of means or through doubt of their own ability to construct stone ceilings. Considering the elaborate expositions of construction in the true timber roofs of the English Gothic, the boarded ceilings of Ely and Peterborough were plainly makeshifts, and equally a makeshift would be the wooden ceiling, of trefoil section, hung to the timbers of the roof and concealing its construction, which Mr. Richardson designed for the Albany Cathedral.

We come here, rather unexpectedly, upon the question of "style.' If a vaulted ceiling be so eminently desirable in a purely monumental building as to amount to an architectural necessity, it is equally clear that the groined vault—that is to say, the vault formed by the


BISHOPS
VESTRY
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AMBULATORY TO VESTRIES
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CHANCEL
CHAPTER HOUSE
CHAPEL
VESTIBULE
NORTH TRANSEPT
SOUTH TRANSEPT
VESTIBULE
CLOISTER
CLOISTER
BAPTISTRY
FONT

GROUND-PLAN.

intersection of two or more vaults—is necessary to the complete development of the vaulting system; and for this the Romance architecture in which Mr. Richardson preferred to work, and which in a general way may be called the style of his design for Albany, does not provide.* The churches of the Provençal Romanesque were vaulted, but with a continuous tunnel vault, supported equally at all points, and demanding an enormous thickness of wall, pierced by few and small openings, to withstand the lateral thrust of the arch. The introduction of groined vaults involved a concentration of the supports and of the counterforts—that is to say, a series of buttresses in place of a continuous wall. The piers of the nave and the exterior buttresses, connected by flying buttresses with the vaults the thrust of which they withstood, thus constituted the framework of the building, and the wall between the buttresses became a mere screen, as finally it did become an avowed screen of painted glass. The history of this development of the vault is the history of the transition from Romanesque to Gothic architecture. The mediæval architects carried this development to its extreme, leaving at last, as in the Sainte Chapelle, no wall at all, and their work has been described as an attempt to "etherealize matter." It may very well be doubted whether the architect of a modern cathedral should not stop short of the result they reached, and strive for a simpler and more robust treatment than theirs—in other words, for a treatment more Romanesque. But if we assume that the cathedral shall be ceiled in mate-

* The alternative of a domical construction is not here considered, though it was adopted in that one of the designs for the Cathedral of New York that was chosen for further development. The competitive design could not be accepted as a solution of the problem, since the domed interior was masked, instead of being expressed, by the exterior.

rial as durable and monumental as that of its walls, we cannot reject the labors of the generations of artistic builders who concerned themselves with that problem, and attained so brilliant a solution of it. To take the instance before us, the clere-story of the nave and of the choir is in effect a continuous arcade of narrow-pointed lancets. It needs a second glance to note that they are grouped in pairs, and that the piers between the pairs are slightly broader than the piers dividing the openings of each pair. The slight increase in mass quite suffices to account in the interior for the principal roof timber which rests upon it, and, with the vaulting-shaft, to continue upward the line of the nave-pier. But if the flying buttress, necessary to transfer the thrust of the vault, were built at this point, the arcade of the exterior would be effectually interrupted, and the space between the buttresses set off into a single bay, as in the wall of the aisle below, which does, in fact, represent a vault. In that case a single large opening would naturally take the place of the pair of lancets, still further emphasizing the division into bays, and the side of the nave would at once bear a much stronger resemblance than it now bears to the accepted type of a cathedral. In the choir a like result would follow, and it would be emphasized at the east end. The circle of apsidal chapels is one of the most striking and most successful features of Mr. Richardson's design. As will be seen from the ground-plan, however, these are features that do not proceed from the interior arrangement so much as features to which the interior arrangement is conformed. Even when viewed from the outside the undeniable power and picturesqueness of the group is marred by the suggestion of something forced and arbitrary in their arrangement. There are precedents in Romanesque architecture for such a disposition,

among them "the great triapsal swing" of the twelfth-century churches of Cologne, though evidently the example that inspired Mr. Richardson was the chevet of Clermont in Auvergne, which he has followed even to the introduction of the mosaic above the springing of the arches. All these, however, are much simpler than the apse designed for Albany. What Mr. Richardson doubtless had in mind was to reproduce the effect of the ring of chapels that forms the chevet of a French Gothic cathedral, without reproducing Gothic forms. But the flying buttresses that radiate from the apse of a French Gothic cathedral determine and bound the chapels that fill the spaces between them, and, by making these appear integral parts of the main structure, save them from the look they would otherwise have of extraneous appendages.

III

It seems, then, that the question of style in a modern cathedral is not to be determined according to the individual preference of a designer for round arches or pointed, for openings traceried or plain. If the problem he is working at has been successfully solved heretofore, he is not at liberty to ignore this solution because it falls without the limits of the historical period he has proposed to himself, and to content himself with an incomplete solution. Of course this remark does not apply as a criticism to Mr. Richardson's design for Albany, prepared under limitations that he was compelled to observe, but which the competitors for the Cathedral of New York were at liberty to disregard. Whether he was right in so far sacrificing the monumental character of his interior to the monumental features of his exterior, is not a practical question for

designers of whom no sacrifice in either direction is demanded. There are very noble examples of vaulted architecture in the Romanesque period—examples which it will be glory enough for the architect of the Cathedral of New York if he succeeds in equalling without slavishly imitating. But in all these there is a lack of that complete correspondence between the interior and the exterior structure that makes the organic unity of a true cathedral, and that was attained for the first time in the thirteenth century, after a series of tentative experiments embodied in these very Romanesque buildings.* It is by no means necessary for an architect to revert to these experiments because he does not sympathize with the expression of strained intensity and "otherworldliness" which the Gothic architects attained, and prefers the more robust, more massive, more mundane aspect of the Romanesque monuments that preceded the great cathedrals. The modelling of these cathedrals is carried so far that nothing is left unmodelled; there are no longer any surfaces; the whole structure is anatomized; and the modern architect, even while he stands astonished at the result of this unsparing analysis, may yet say, "It were to consider too curiously to consider so." But it is not by refusing the aid these wonderful structures offer him that he can advance upon or equal them. The development of a cathedral requires, indeed, a system of piers and vaults and flying arches and weighted buttresses. But these need not be the same features in modelling, in detail, or in expression that we know in historical examples. Instances are not wanting to show that they

* See Mr. Charles Herbert Moore's excellent "Development and Character of Gothic Architecture," published since this paper was written; a work which no student of Gothic or of cathedral-building can afford not to read.

TRANSVERSE SECTION THROUGH CHOIR.

may be massed with the stalwart simplicity of the Romanesque builders as well as drawn into the complex and bewildering forms they assumed in the later Gothic. In his design for Albany, Mr. Richardson has shown very clearly that an artist, whose individuality is strong enough, can put its stamp upon whatever he adopts. The common distinction that Romanesque is a round-arched and Gothic a pointed style, is shown to be baseless in an unmistakably Romanesque church in which all the openings of the clere-story are pointed lancets, in which the pointed openings elsewhere far outnumber the round arches, and in which the architect has introduced tracery, sparingly but effectively, without at all marring the unity of the structure. Nay, the church owes the suggestion of some of its noblest features to works that did not exist until the period classified as Romanesque had closed. A modern architect forfeits his birthright who does not use all that the past has to offer him of help; and his originality is impeached only if he does not overrule to his own purposes what he adopts, if he copies instead of using. The west front of Albany, for example, is the west front of Notre Dame of Paris, with differences, as marked as the resemblances, which convert it into a new creation. The three entrances, burrowed through the thickness of the wall and not projected from the face, are repeated, but with a strong and decorated belt course at their springing. The buttresses, bringing down the line of the towers at Paris and dividing the front into three, are omitted, and a balustrade in relief takes the place of the line of statues. The flanking towers thus rise from a continuous base, and a tall mock-arcade marks their lines in the next stage and emphasizes the flanking wall, which in the mediæval example is pierced with a double arch on each side of the rose-window, and the

central wall is here recessed to serve the same purpose of detaching the towers which in Notre Dame is answered by the buttresses, while above the rose-window another balustrade corresponds to the tall traceried arcade, and the lancets of the belfry stage, double in Notre Dame, are here grouped in threes. Except the buttresses, every feature of the old front has its counterpart, but by the emphasis given to the horizontal lines, and the diminution of the vertical lines, in one instance amounting to an effacement, the whole aspect of the façade is transformed. This is an admirable example of the manner in which a modern architect may employ his inheritance. Another, not less admirable, is the adoption in the transept entrance of the main and most characteristic feature of the famous "triple northern porch" of Chartres, the interpolation of narrow arches between the main portals and below the springing of their arches. This is a still more signal instance of what we have been saying of the power of changing the expression of a feature while retaining its substance, for the northern porch of Chartres is one of the loveliest fantasies of a late and highly ornate Gothic, and it is here translated back into the severer Romanesque, as all the structural features of a fully developed cathedral might be.

IV

But it is not in its details nor in its features, fine as many of these are, that Mr. Richardson's design for Albany offers the most inspiring suggestions and the safest model. It is in the sense that pervades it of the all-importance of the relation of its masses, and in the mastery it shows of architectural composition. It was long ago noted as a mark of an artistic work of archi-

tecture that it "pyramidizes," and this implies a single culminating feature to which the parts converge and rise. In the work which first fixed Mr. Richardson's rank among American architects—Trinity Church in Boston—the most striking merit of the design is the manner in which the parts are subordinated to the noble and massive central tower. In his design for Albany the same subordination is carried through more gradations, and it is both more subtle and more successful. The outer aisles of the nave are secluded altogether from the interior, and set off in the "cloisters" or loggie that are among the most effective features of the building, and among the happiest suggestions its designer derived from the study of Spanish architecture. The roofs of these recede to the walls of the aisle proper, the roofs of which are conspicuous, so that the clere-story is seen above a succession of terraces. At the east end the circle of chapels and the aisle roofs and the sharp slope of the main roof rise in receding masses that converge towards the great central tower, which from the side broadens down upon the flanking towers of the transept. The relation between the western and the central towers is far happier than in the earlier example, and the central tower itself shows as great an advance upon the tower of Trinity as does that upon the tower of Salamanca, from which the suggestion of it was derived. But the western front is perhaps the most brilliantly successful illustration of its author's power. We have seen that Mr. Richardson refused the aid of the buttresses, which with their successive offsets narrow the fronts of Gothic cathedrals as they rise, but he replaced them with a series of devices that answer the same purpose almost as effectively. The flanking towers are themselves flanked at the base by low polygonal hooded structures that are

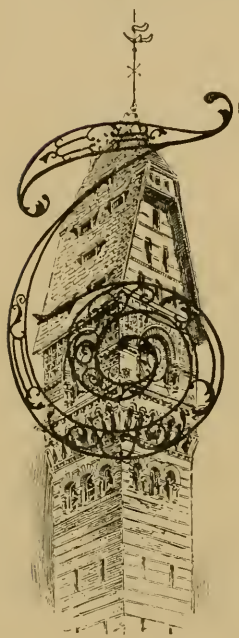
succeeded by attached turrets reaching to the belfry stage. The roofs of the western towers themselves next converge towards the looming bulk of the central feature, to which they serve as pinnacles. Surely in all the achievements of architectural amity through variety that the Middle Ages have bequeathed to us, there are few that in nobleness and dignity surpass the effect that is promised by Mr. Richardson's design for the west front of Albany, and in modern work where shall we look for a parallel.

This very central tower may serve as a reminder of the point in which a modern cathedral may mark an architectural advance upon the mediæval art which, in most respects, its builders may be well content if they can equal. For the culminating feature of the exterior should be the culminating feature of the interior also, and it was this need that the mediæval architects left unanswered. They recognized it, and in the cimborio of the Spanish cathedral, and in such experiments as the octagon of Ely, they made the beginnings of an answer, but these are no more to be accepted as complete than the Romanesque system of vaulting, which the Gothic architects developed to its perfection. The flèche of a French cathedral emphasizes rather than supplies the need of such a culmination. The central towers of such English cathedrals as possess them are purely exterior ornaments, as unrelated to the body of the church as its western towers. In Mr. Richardson's design the tall and narrow dome at the crossing would not be apprehensible as a crowning feature, except from a point of view almost directly beneath it, while its external form does not intimate its interior function. It was a true feeling that led the architects of the Italian Renaissance to embrace the aisles as well as the nave under the central dome, though they clothed their con-

struction in untrue forms. To develop true forms for it is the one advance upon past ecclesiastical architecture which seems to be possible, and to develop these may be said to be the central problem of design in an American cathedral.

GLIMPSES OF WESTERN ARCHITECTURE

I.—CHICAGO



CLOCK TOWER, DEARBORN STATION.
C. L. W. Eidlitz, Architect.

TO begin with a paradox, the feature of Chicago is its featurelessness. There is scarcely any capital, ancient or modern, to which the site supplies so little of a visible reason of being. The prairie and the lake meet at a level, a liquid plain and a plain of mud that cannot properly be called solid, with nothing but the change of material to break the expanse. Indeed, when there is a breeze, the surface of Lake Michigan would be distinctly more diversified than that of the adjoining land, but for the handiwork of man. In point of fact, Chicago is of course explained by the confluence here of the two branches of the Chicago River. These have determined the site, the plan, and the building of the town, but one can scarcely describe as natural features the two sinuous ditches that drain the prairie into the lake, apparently in defiance of the law that water runs, and even oozes, down hill. Streams, however narrow and sluggish they may be, so they be themselves available for traffic, operate an obstruction to traffic by land; and it is the fact that for some distance from the junction the

south fork of the river flows parallel with the shore of the lake, and within a half-mile of it, which establishes in this enclosure the commercial centre of Chicago. Even the slight obstacle interposed to traffic by the confluent streams, bridged and tunnelled as they are, has sufficed greatly to raise the cost of land within this area, in comparison with that outside, and to compel here the erection of the towering structures that are the most characteristic and the most impressive monuments of the town.

In character and impressiveness these by no means disappoint the stranger's expectations, but in number and extent they do, rather. For what one expects of Chicago, before anything else, is modernness. In most things one's expectations are fully realized. It is the most contemporaneous of capitals, and in the appearance of its people and their talk in the streets and in the clubs and in the newspapers it fairly palpitates with "actuality." Nevertheless, the general aspect of the business quarter is distinctly old-fashioned, and this even to the effete Oriental from New York or Boston. The elevator is nearly a quarter of a century old, and the first specimens of "elevator architecture," the Western Union and the "Tribune" buildings in New York, are very nearly coeval with the great fire in Chicago. One would have supposed that the rebuilders of Chicago would have seized upon this hint with avidity, and that its compressed commercial quarter would have made up in altitude what it lacked in area. In fact, not only are the great modern office buildings still exceptional in the most costly and most crowded district, but it is astonishing to hear that the oldest of them is scarcely more than seven years of age. "Men's deeds are after as they have been accustomed"—and the first impulse of the burnt-out merchants of Chicago was not to seize the opportunity the clean sweep of the fire had given

them to improve their warehouses and office buildings, but to provide themselves straightway with places in which they could find shelter and do business. The consequence was that the new buildings of the burnt district were planned and designed, as well as built, with the utmost possible speed, and the rebuilding was for the most part done by the same architects who had built the old Chicago, and who took even less thought the second time than they had taken the first, by reason of the greater pressure upon them. The American commercial Renaissance, commonly expressed in cast-iron, was in its full efflorescence just before the fire. The material was discredited by that calamity, but unhappily not the forms it had taken, and in Chicago we may see, what is scarcely to be seen anywhere else in the world, fronts in cast-iron, themselves imitated from lithic architecture, again imitated in masonry, with the modifications reproduced that had been made necessary by the use of the less trustworthy material. This ignoble process is facilitated by the material at hand, a limestone of which slabs can be had in sizes that simulate exactly the castings from which the treatment of them is derived. After the exposure of a few months to the bituminous fumes it is really impossible to tell one of these reproductions from the original, which very likely adjoins it. Masonry and metal alike appear to have come from a foundry, rather than from a quarry, and to have been moulded according to the stock patterns of some architectural iron-works. The lifelessness and thoughtlessness of the iron-founders' work predominate in the streets devoted to the retail trade, and the picturesque tourist in Chicago is thus compelled to traverse many miles of street fronts quite as dismal and as monotonous as the commercial architecture of any other modern town.

There is a compensation for this in what at first sight seems to be one of its aggravations. The buildings which wear these stereotyped street fronts are much lower and less capacious than the increasing exigencies of business require, and than the introduction of the elevator makes possible, and they could not be other than cheap and flimsy in construction. Naturally the rebuilders of Chicago talked a great deal about "absolutely fire-proof" construction, but as naturally they did very little of it. The necessity for immediate accommodation, at a minimum of cost, was overwhelming, and cheap and hasty construction cannot be fire-proof construction. Accordingly, the majority of the commercial buildings now standing in Chicago are as really provisional and temporary as the tents and shanties, pitched almost on the embers of the fire, which they succeeded. The time being now ripe for replacing them by structures more capacious and durable, it is a matter for congratulation that there is nothing in the existing buildings of such practical or architectural value as to make anybody regret or obstruct the substitution.

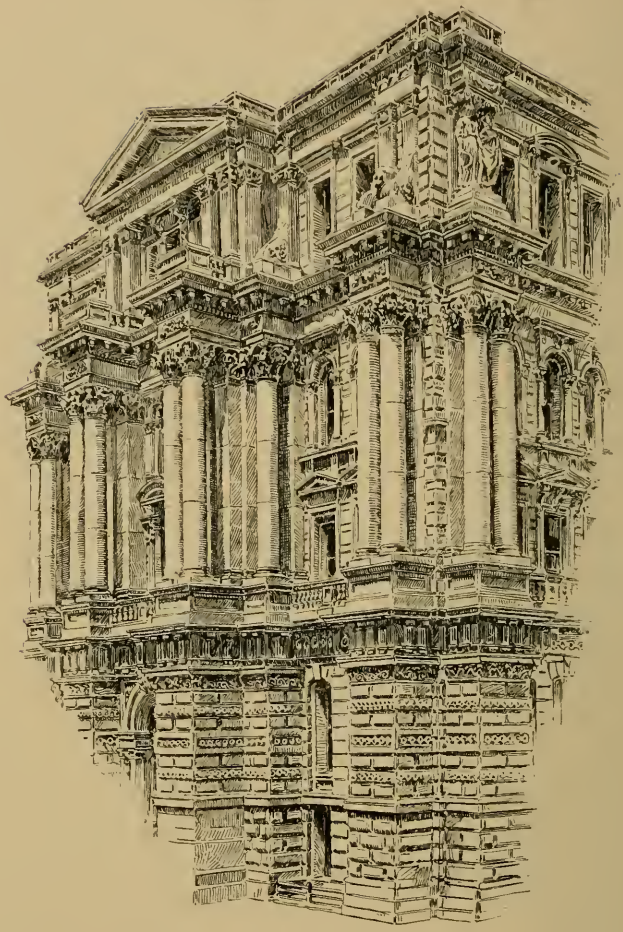
Even if the old-fashioned architects who rebuilt Chicago had been anxious to reconstruct it according to the best and newest lights, it would have been quite out of their power to do so unaided. The erection of a twelve-story building anywhere involves an amount of mechanical consideration and a degree of engineering skill that are quite beyond the practitioners of the American metallic Renaissance. In Chicago the problem is more complicated than elsewhere, because these towering and massive structures ultimately rest upon a quagmire that is not less but more untrustworthy the deeper one digs. The distribution of the weight by carrying the foundations down to a trustworthy bottom, and increasing the area of the supporting piers as they de-

scend, is not practicable here, nor, for the same reason, can it be done by piling. It is managed, in the heaviest buildings, by floating them upon a raft of concrete and railroad iron, spread a few feet below the surface, so that there are no cellars in the business quarter, and the subterranean activities that are so striking in the elevator buildings of New York are quite unknown. If the architects of the old Chicago, to whom their former clients naturally applied to rear the phœnix of the new, had been seized with the ambition of building Babels, they would doubtless have made as wild work practically as they certainly would have made artistically in the confusion of architectural tongues that would have fallen upon them. It is in every point of view fortunate that the modernization of the town was reserved for the better-trained designers of a younger generation.

It might be expected that the architecture of Chicago would be severely utilitarian in purpose if not in design, and this is the case. The city may be said to consist of places of business and places of residence. There are no churches, for example, that fairly represent the skill of the architects. The best of them are scarcely worthy of illustration or discussion here, while the worst of them might suitably illustrate the work projected by a ribald wit on "The Comic Aspects of Christianity." Among other things, it follows from this deficiency that Chicago lacks almost altogether, in any general view that can be had of it, the variety and animation that are imparted to the sky line of a town seen from the water, or from an eminence, by a "tiara of proud towers," even when these are not specially attractive in outline or in detail, nor especially fortunate in their grouping. There is nothing, for example, in the aspect of Chicago from the lake, or from any attainable point

of view, that is comparable to the sky-line of the Back Bay of Boston, as seen from the Cambridge bridge, or of lower New York from either river. The towering buildings are almost wholly flat-roofed, and their stark, rectangular outlines cannot take on picturesqueness, even under the friendly drapery of the smoke that overhangs the commercial quarter during six days of the week. The architect of the Dearborn Station was very happily inspired when he relieved the prevailing monotony with the quaint and striking clock-tower that adjoins that structure.

The secular public buildings of Chicago are much more noteworthy than the churches, but upon the whole they bear scarcely so large a relation to the mass of private building as one would expect from the wealth and the public spirit of the town, and with one or two very noteworthy exceptions, recent as many of them are, they were built too early. The most discussed of them is the city and county building, and this has been discussed for reasons quite alien to its architecture, the halves of what was originally a single design having been assigned to different architects. The original design has been followed in the main, and the result is an edifice that certainly makes a distinctive impression. A building, completely detached, 340 feet by 280 in area, and considerably over 100 feet high, can scarcely fail to make an impression by dint of mere magnitude, but there is rather more than that in the city and county building. The parts are few and large, but five stories appearing, the masonry is massive, and the projecting and pedimented porticoes are on an ample scale. These things give the building a certain effect of sumptuosity and swagger that ally it rather to the Parisian than to the Peorian Renaissance. The effect is marred by certain drawbacks of detail, and by one that is scarcely of



FROM THE CITY AND COUNTY BUILDING.
J. W. Egan and J. R. Mullett, Architects.

detail, the extreme meanness and baldness of the attic, in which, for the only time in the building, the openings seem to be arranged with some reference to their uses, and in which accordingly they have a painfully pinched and huddled appearance. In the decorative detail there is apparent a divergency of views between the two architects appointed to carry out the divided halves of the

united design. The municipal designer—or possibly it is the county gentleman—has been content to stand upon the ancient ways, and to introduce no detail for which he has not found Ludovican precedent, while his rival is of a more aspiring mind, and has endeavored to carry out the precepts of the late Thomas Jefferson, by classicizing things modern. His excursions are not very daring, and consist mainly in such substitutions as that of an Indian's head for the antique mask, in a frieze of conventionalized American foliage. He has attained what must be in such an attempt the gratifying success of converting his modern material to a result as dull and lifeless and uninteresting as his prototype. It does not, however, impair the grandiosity of the general effect. This is impaired, not merely by the poverty of design already noted in the attic, but also by the niggardliness shown in dividing the polished granite column of the porticoes into several drums, though monoliths are plainly indicated by their dimensions, and by the general scale of the masonry. The small economy is the more injurious, because a noble regardlessness of expense is of the essence of the architecture, and an integral part of its effectiveness. The most monumental feature of the projected building has never been supplied—a huge arch in the centre of each of the shorter fronts, giving access to the central court, and marking the division between the property of the city and of the county. It is possible that the failure to finish this arch has proceeded from the political conflict that has left its scars upon the building elsewhere. There is an obvious practical difficulty in intrusting the two halves of an arch to rival architects and rival contractors. However that may be, the arch is unbuilt, and the entrance to the central court is a mere rift in the wall. The practical townspeople have seized the opportunity

thus presented by the unoccupied space of free quarters for the all-pervading buggy. With a contempt for the constituted authorities that it must be owned the constituted authorities have gone far to justify, they tether their horses in the shadow of their chief civic monument, like so many Arabs under the pillars of Palmyra or Persepolis, and heighten the impression of being the relic of an extinct race that is given to the pile not only by its unfinished state and by the stains of smoke, undistinguishable from those of time, but by its entirely exotic architecture. As the newly-landed Irishman, making his way up Broadway from Castle Garden, is said to have exclaimed, when he came in sight of the City Hall, that "that never was built in this country," so the stranger in Chicago is tempted to declare of its municipal building that it could not have been reared by the same race of whose building activities the other evidences surround him. This single example of Ludovican architecture recalls, as most examples of it do, Thackeray's caricature of its Mecænas. Despoiled of its periwigs and its high heels, that is to say, of its architecture, which is easily separable from it, the building would merely lose all its character, without losing anything that belongs to it as a building.

Nevertheless this municipal building has its character, and in comparison with the next most famous public building of Chicago, it vindicates the wisdom of its architect in subjecting himself to the safeguard of a style of which, moreover, his work shows a real study. The style may be absolutely irrelevant both to our needs and to our ideas, as irrelevant as the political system of Louis XIV. which it recalls. Its formulas may seem quite empty, but they gather dignity, if not meaning, when contrasted with the work of an avid "swallower of formulas," like the architect of the Board

of Trade. His work is of no style, a proposition that is not invalidated by the probability that he himself would call it "American eclectic Gothic." We all know what the untutored and aboriginal architect stretches that term to cover. There is no doubt about its being

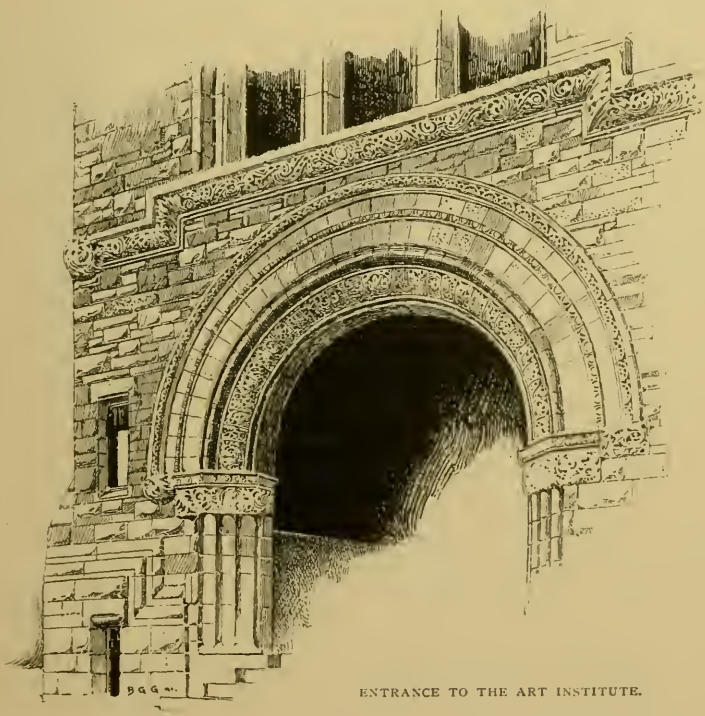
THE ART INSTITUTE.
Burnham & Root, Architects.

characteristically modern and American; one might say characteristically Western, if he did not recall equally free and untrammelled exuberances in the Atlantic States. But it is impossible to ascribe to it any architectural merit, unless a complete disregard for precedent is to be imputed for righteousness, whether it proceed from ignorance or from contempt. And, indeed, there are not many other structures in the

United States, of equal cost and pretension, which equally with this combine the dignity of a commercial traveller with the bland repose of St. Vitus. It is difficult to contemplate its bustling and uneasy façade without feeling a certain sympathy with the mob of anarchists that "demonstrated" under its windows on the night of its opening. If they were really anarchists, it was very ungrateful of them, for one would go far to find a more perfect expression of anarchy in architecture, and it is conceivable that they were instigated by an outraged architectural critic in disguise. If that ringleader had been caught and arraigned, he could have maintained, with much better reason, the plea that Gustave Courbet made for his share in the destruction of the column of the Place Vendôme, that his opposition to the monument was not political, but æsthetic.

Fortunately there is no other among the public or quasi-public buildings of Chicago of which the architecture is so hopeless and so irresponsible—no other that would so baffle the palæontological Paley who should seek in it evidences of design, and that does not exhibit, at least, an architectural purpose, carried out with more or less of consistency and success. At the very centre of the commercial water front there was wisely reserved from traffic in the rebuilding of the town the "Lake Park," a mile in extent, and some hundreds of feet in depth, which not only serves the purpose of affording a view of the lake from the business quarter, but also secures an effective foreground for the buildings that line its landward edge. One of the oldest of these, young as all of them are, is the "Art Institute," designed by Messrs. Burnham & Root. This is of a moderate altitude, and suffers somewhat from being dwarfed by the elevator buildings erected

since, being but of three stories and a roof; but no neighbor could make it other than a vigorous and effective work, as dignified as the Board of Trade is uneasy, and as quiet as that is noisy. It is extremely simple in composition, as will be seen, and it bears very little ornament, this being for the most part concentrated upon the ample and deeply moulded archway of the entrance. It owes its effectiveness to the clearness of its division into the three main parts of base and superstructure and roof, to the harmonious relation between them, and to the differences in the treatment of them that enhance this harmony. The Aristotelian precept that a work of art must have a beginning, a middle, and an end, is nowhere more conspicuously valid



ENTRANCE TO THE ART INSTITUTE.

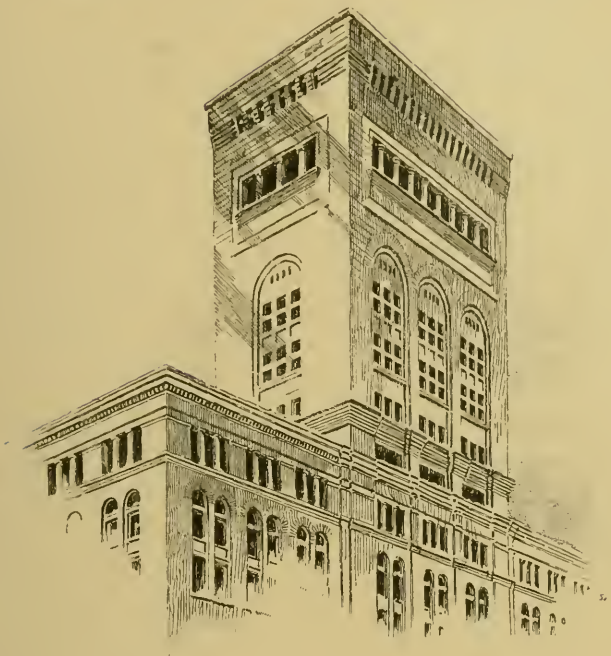
than in architecture, and nowhere does the neglect of it entail more unfortunate consequences. The severity of the basement, with its plain rectangular openings, is an effective introduction to the somewhat lighter and more open fenestration of the second and third stories, which are grouped to form the second term in the proportion, and this in turn to the range of openings in the gable of the shorter front, and to the row of peaked dormers in the longer that animate the sky-line and complete the composition. The impressiveness of the fronts is very greatly deepened by the vigorous framing of massive angle piers in which they are enclosed, the vigor of which is enhanced by the solid pinnacled turrets, corbelled out above the second story, that help to weight them, and that visibly abut the outward thrust of the arcades. It may be significant, with reference to the tendency of Western architecture, that this admirable building, admirable in the sobriety and moderation that are facilitated by its moderate size, is precisely what one would not expect to find in Chicago, so little is there evident in it of an intention to "collar the eye," or to challenge the attention it so very well repays.

In part, as we have just intimated, this modesty may be ascribed to the modest dimensions of the building. At any rate, it was out of the question in another important quasi-public building, which is the latest, and, at this writing, the loudest of the lions of Chicago—the Auditorium. Whatever else a ten-story building, nearly 300 feet by more than 350 in area and 140 in height, with a tower rising 80 feet farther, may happen to be, it must be conspicuous, and it is no wise possible that its designer should make it appear bashful or unobtrusive. Of however retiring a disposition he may be, in such a situation he must brazen it out. It is in his

BALCONY OF AUDITORIUM.
Adler & Sullivan, Architects.

power to adopt a very simple or a very elaborate treatment, and to imperil the success of his work by making it dull on the one hand or unquiet on the other. Messrs. Adler & Sullivan, the architects of the Auditorium, have chosen the better part in treating their huge fronts with great severity, insomuch that the building can scarcely be said to exhibit any "features," except the triple entrance on the lake front, with its overhanging balcony, and the square tower that rises over the southern front to a height of 225 feet. While they did wisely in showing that monotony had fewer terrors for them than restlessness, the monotony that undoubtedly amounts to a defect in the aspect of the completed work is by no means wholly or mainly at-

tributable to them. A place of popular entertainment, constructed upon a scale and with a massiveness to which we can scarcely find a parallel since Roman days, would present one of the worthiest and most interesting problems a modern architect could have if he were left to solve it unhampered. It is quite difficult enough to tax the power of any designer without any complications. The problem of design in the Chicago Auditorium is much complicated with requirements entirely irrelevant to its main purpose. The lobbies, the auditorium, and the stage of a great theatre, which are its essential parts, are all susceptible of an exterior expression more truthful and more striking than has yet been attained, in spite of many earnest and interesting essays. In the interior of the Auditorium, where the architects were left free, they have devoted themselves to solving their real problem with a high degree of success, and have attained an impressive simplicity and largeness. We are not dealing with interiors, however, and they were required to envelop the outside of their theatre in a shell of many-storied commercial architecture, which forbade them even to try for a monumental expression of their great hall. In the main, their exterior appears and must be judged only as a "business block." They have their exits and their entrances, and it is really only in these features that the exterior betrays the primary purpose of the building. The tower, even, is evidently not so much monumental as utilitarian. It is prepared for in the substructure only by a slight and inadequate projection of the piers, while it is itself obviously destined for profitable occupancy, being a small three-story business block, superimposed upon a huge ten-story business block. Such a structure cannot be converted into a monumental feature by making it more massive at the top than it is at the bottom,



TOWER OF AUDITORIUM.
Adler & Sullivan, Architects.

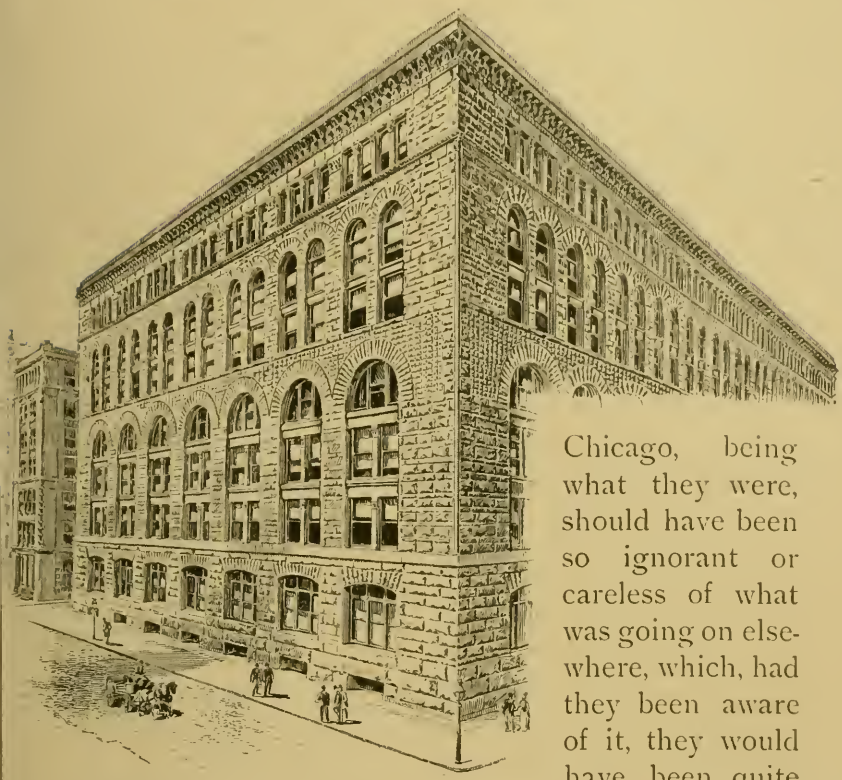
even though the massiveness be as artistically accentuated as it is in the tower of the Auditorium by the powerful open colonnade and the strong machicolated cornice in which it culminates. Waiving, as the designers have been compelled to do, the main purpose of the structure, and considering it as a commercial building, the Auditorium does not leave very much to be desired. The basement, especially, which consists of three stories of granite darker than the limestone of the superstructure, and appropriately rough-faced, is a vigorous and dignified performance, in which the expression of rugged strength is enhanced by the small and deep openings, and in which the necessarily large openings of the ground-floor are prevented from en-

feebling the design by the massiveness of the lintels and flat arches that enclose them, and of the piers and pillars by which these are supported. The superstructure is scarcely worthy of this basement. The triple vertical division of the wall is effectively proportioned, but a much stronger demarcation is needed between the second and third members than is furnished by the discontinuous sill-course of the eighth story, while a greater projection, a greater depth, and a more vigorous modelling of the main cornice, and an enrichment of the attic beneath, would go far to relieve the baldness and monotony that are the defects of the design, and that are scarcely to be condoned because there are architectural faults much worse and much more frequent, which the designers have avoided. It is only, as has been said, in the entrances that they have been permitted to exhibit the object of the building. Really, it is only in the entrance on the Lake front, for the triplet of stilted arches at the base of the tower is not a very felicitous or a very congruous feature. The three low arches of the Lake front are of a Roman largeness—true vomitoria—and their effectiveness is increased by the simplicity of their treatment, by the ample lateral abutment provided for them, and by the long and shallow balcony that overhangs them. With the arches themselves this makes a very impressive feature, albeit the balcony is a very questionable feature. Even to the layman there must be a latent contradiction in the intercalation of the pillar to relieve the bearing of a lintel, when the pillar is referred to an unsupported shelf, obviously lighter and weaker than the lintel itself. This contradiction is not explained away by the vigor and massiveness of the shallow corbels that really account for the alternate columns, and it suggests that the construc-

tion so exhibited is not the true construction at all, and leaves this latter to be inferred without any help from the architecture. Even if one waives his objection to architectural forms that do not agree with the structural facts, it is surely not pedantic to require that the construction asserted by the forms shall be plausible to the extent of agreeing with itself. It is a pity that there should be such a drawback from a feature so effective; but the drawback does not prevent the feature from being effective, nor do the shortcomings we have been considering in the design of the Auditorium, nor even the much more serious obstacle that was inherent in the problem and imposed upon the architects, prevent it from being a very impressive structure, and justifying the pride with which it is regarded by all patriotic Chicagoans.

But, as has been intimated, it is not in monumental edifices that the characteristic building of Chicago is to be looked for. The "business block," entirely utilitarian in purpose, and monumental only in magnitude and in solidity of construction, is the true and typical embodiment in building of the Chicago idea. This might be said, of course, of any American city. Undoubtedly the most remarkable achievements of our architects and the most creditable have been in commercial architecture. But in this respect Chicago is more American than any of the Eastern cities, where there are signs, even in the commercial quarters, of division of interest and infirmity of purpose. In none of them does the building bespeak such a singleness of devotion, or indicate that life means so exclusively a living. Even the exceptions prove the rule by such tokens as the modest dimensions of the Art Institute and the concealment of the Auditorium in the heart of a business block. It does not by any means follow that the

business blocks are uninteresting. There are singularly few exceptions to the rule of dismalness in the buildings that were hurriedly run up after the fire. One of these exceptions, the American Express Company, has an extrinsic interest as being the work of Mr. Richardson, and as being, so far as it need be classified, an example of Victorian Gothic, although its openings are all lintelled, instead of the Provençal Romanesque to which its author afterwards addicted himself with such success. So successful an example is it that an eminent but possibly bilious English architect, who visited Chicago at an early stage of the rebuilding, declared it to be the only thing in the town worth looking at—a judgment that does not seem so harsh to the tourist of to-day who compares it with its thus disesteemed contemporaries. It is a sober and straightforward performance in a safe monochrome of olive sandstone, and it thus lacks the note of that variety of Victorian Gothic that Mr. Ruskin's eloquence stimulated untrained American designers to produce, in which the restlessness of unstudied forms is still further tormented by the spotty application of color. From this variety of Victorian Gothic Chicago is happily free. A gabled building in brick and sandstone opposite the Palmer House is almost a unique, and not at all an unfavorable, example. The business streets that are now merely dismal would have been much more aggressively painful if the incapable architects who built them had deviated from the comparative safety of their cast-iron Renaissance into a style that put them upon their individual want of resources. Moreover, throughout the commercial quarter any attempt at a structural use of color is sure shortly to be frustrated by coal-smoke. Upon the whole, it is a matter for congratulation that the earlier rebuilders of



THE FIELD BUILDING.
H. H. Richardson, Architect.

Chicago, being what they were, should have been so ignorant or careless of what was going on elsewhere, which, had they been aware of it, they would have been quite certain to misapply. Not only did they thus escape the frantic result that came of Victorian Gothic in untutored hands, but they escaped the pettiness and puerility that resulted of "Queen Anne," even when it was done by designers who ought to have known better. These pages contain a disparagement of that curious mode of building in a paper written when it was dressed in its little brief authority and playing its most fantastic tricks. Now it is so well recognized that Queen Anne is dead, that it seems strange educated architects ever could have fancied they detected the promise and potency of architec-

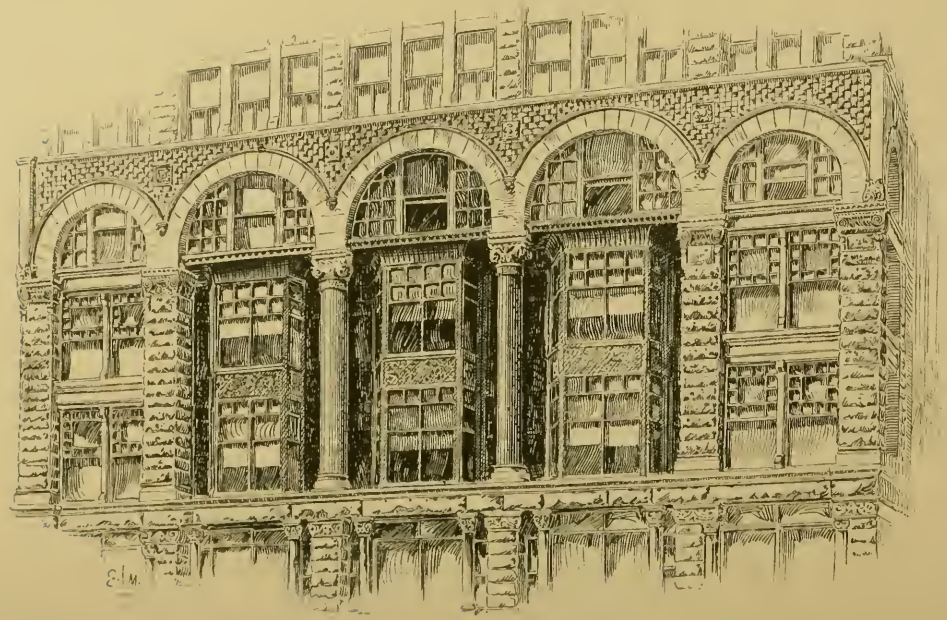
tural life in her cold remains. This most evanescent of fashions seems never to have prevailed in Chicago at all.

One of the earliest of the more modern and characteristic of the commercial structures of Chicago, the Field Building, is by Mr. Richardson also, a huge warehouse covering a whole square, and seven stories high. With such an opportunity, Mr. Richardson could be trusted implicitly at least to make the most of his dimensions, and large as the building is in fact, it looks interminably big. Its bigness is made apparent by the simplicity of its treatment and the absence of any lateral division whatever. Simplicity, indeed, could scarcely go further. The vast expanses of the fronts are unrelieved by any ornament except a leaf in the cornice, and a rudimentary capital in the piers and mullions of the colonnaded attic. The effect of the mass is due wholly to its magnitude, to the disposition of its openings, and to the emphatic exhibition of the masonic structure. The openings, except in the attic, and except for an ample pier reserved at each corner, are equally spaced throughout. The vertical division is limited to a sharp separation from the intermediate wall veil of the basement on one hand, and of the attic on the other. It must be owned that there is even a distinct infelicity in the arrangement of the five stories of this intermediate wall, the two superposed arcades, the upper of which, by reason of its multiplied supports, is the more solid of aspect, and between which there is no harmonious relation, but contrariwise a competition. Nevertheless, the main division is so clear, and the handling throughout so vigorous, as to carry off even a more serious defect. Nothing of its kind could be more impressive than the rugged expanse of masonry, of which the bonding is expressed throughout, and which in the granite basement becomes Cyclopean in scale, and in

the doorway especially, Cyclopean in rude strength. The great pile is one of the most interesting as it is one of the most individual examples of American commercial building. In it the vulgarity of the "commercial palace" is gratefully conspicuous by its absence, and it is as monumental in its massiveness and durability as it is grimly utilitarian in expression.

It is in this observance of the proprieties of commercial architecture, and in this self-denying rejection of an ornateness improper to it, that the best of the commercial architecture of Chicago is a welcome surprise to the tourist from the East. When the rebuilding of the business quarter of Boston was in progress, and while that city was for the most part congratulating itself upon the display of the skill of its architects for which the fire had opened a field, Mr. Richardson observed to the author of these remarks that there was more character in the plain and solid warehouses that had been destroyed than in the florid edifices by which they had been replaced. The saying was just, for the burned Boston was as unmistakably commercial as much of the rebuilt Boston is irrelevantly palatial. In the warehouse just noticed, Mr. Richardson himself resisted this besetting temptation of the architect, and his work certainly loses nothing of the simplicity which, with the uninstructed builders of old Boston, was in large part mere ignorance and unskilfulness, but emphasizes it by the superior power of distributing his masses that belonged to him as a trained and sensitive designer; for the resources of an artist are required to give an artistic and poignant expression even of rudeness. The rebuilt commercial quarter of Boston is by no means an extreme example of misplaced ornateness. Within the past three or four years Wall Street has been converted from the hum-drum respectability of an old-fashioned business thoroughfare to a

street of commercial palaces, the aspect of which must contain an element of grievousness to the judicious, who see that the builders have lavished their repertory of ornament and variety on buildings to which nobody resorts for pleasure, but everybody for business alone, and that they have left themselves nothing further to do in the way of enrichment when they come to do temples and palaces, properly so called. Mr. Ruskin has fallen into deep, and largely into deserved discredit as an architectural critic, by promulgating rhapsodies as dogmas. His intellectual frivolity is even more evident and irritating by reason of the moral earnestness that attends it, recalling that perfervid pulpiteer of whom a like-minded eulogist affirmed that "he wielded his prurient imagination like a battle-axe in the service of the Lord of Hosts." All the same, lovers of architecture owe him gratitude for his eloquent inculcation of some of the truths that he arrived at by feeling, however inconclusive is the reasoning by which he endeavors to support them, and one of these is the text, so much preached from in the "Seven Lamps," that "where rest is forbidden, so is ornament." Wall Street and the business quarter of Boston, and every commercial palace in every city, violate, in differing degrees, this plain dictate of good sense and good taste, even in the very rare instances in which the misplacement of the ornateness is the worst thing that can be alleged against it. In the best of the commercial buildings of Chicago there is nothing visible of the conflict of which we hear so much from architects, mostly in the way of complaint, between the claims of "art" and the claims of utility, nor any evidence of a desire to get the better of a practical client by smuggling architecture upon him, and deceiving him for his own good and the glory of his architect. It is a very good lesson to see how the strictly architectural suc-



ARCADE FROM THE STUDEBAKER BUILDING.
S. S. Beman, Architect.

cess of the commercial buildings is apt to be directly in proportion to the renunciation by the designers of conventional "architecturesqueness," and to their loyal acceptance at all points of the utilitarian conditions under which they are working.

The Studebaker Building is one of the show buildings of Chicago, but it cannot be said to deserve this particular praise in so high a degree as several less celebrated structures. It partakes—shall we say?—too much of the palatial character of Devonshire Street and Wall Street to be fairly representative of the severity of commercial architecture in Chicago. It is very advantageously placed, fronting the Lake Park, and it is in several respects not unworthy of its situation. The arrangement of the first five stories is striking, and the arcade that embraces the three upper of these is a striking and well-studied feature, with detail very good in itself and very well adjusted in place and in scale. It is the profusion of this detail and the lavish introduction of carved marble and of polished granite shafts that first impress every beholder with its palatial rather than commercial character, but this character is not less given to the front, or to that part of it which has character, by the very general composition that makes the front so striking. An arcade superposed upon two colonnades, which are together of less than its own height, can scarcely fail of impressiveness; but here it loses some of its impressiveness in losing all its significance by reason of its subdivision into three equal stories, none of them differing in purpose from any other or from the colonnade below, and the larger grouping that simulates a lofty hall above two minor stories is thus seen to be merely capricious. Of course pretty much the same criticism may be passed upon most American works of commercial architecture, and

upon the best not less than upon the worst, but that it cannot be passed upon the best commercial buildings of Chicago is their peculiar praise. Moreover, the Studebaker building has some marked defects peculiar to its design. The flanking piers of the building, in spite of the effort made to increase their apparent massiveness by a solid treatment of the terminal arches at the base, are painfully thin and inadequate, and their tenuity is emphasized by the modelling into nook shafts of their inner angles in the second story. These are serious blemishes upon the design of the first five stories, and these stories exhaust the architectural interest of the building. There is something even ludicrous in the sudden and complete collapse of the architecture above the large arcade, as if the ideas of the designer had all at once given out, or rather as if an untrained builder had been called upon to add three stories to the unfinished work of a scholarly architect. In truth, this superstructure does not show a single felicity either of disposition or detail, but is wholly mean and commonplace. It suffices to vulgarize the building below it, and it is itself quite superfluously vulgarized by the unmeaning and irrelevant conical roofs with which the sky-line is tormented. If the substructure be amenable to the criticism that it is not commercial architecture, the superstructure is amenable to the more radical criticism that it is not architecture at all.

The Owings Building is another conspicuous commercial structure that invites the same criticism of not being strictly commercial, but in a very different way. There is here no prodigality of ornament, and no irrelevant preciousness of material. A superstructure of grayish brick surmounts a basement of gray-stone, and the only decoration is reserved for the main entrance, which it is appropriate to signalize and render conspicu-

THE OWINGS BUILDING.
Cobb & Frost, Architects.

ous even in works of the barest utility. This is attained here by the lofty gable, crocketed and covered with carving, that rises above the plain archway which forms the entrance itself. The lintelled openings of the basement elsewhere are of a Puritanical severity, and so are the arched openings of the brick superstructure. Neither is there the least attempt to suggest the thing that is not in the interior arrangement by way of giving variety and interest to the exterior. In the treatment of the wall space, the only one of the "unnecessary features," in which Mr. Ruskin declares architecture to consist, is the corniced frieze above the fourth story of the superstructure, with its suggested support of tall and slim pilasters; and this is quite justifiable as giving the building a triple division, and distinguishing the main wall from the gable. For this purpose, however, obviously enough, the dividing feature should be placed between the two parts it is meant to differentiate; and in the present instance this line is two stories higher than the point actually selected, and is now marked only by

a light string course. If the emphatic horizontal belt had been raised these two stories, the division it creates would not only have corresponded to the organic division of the building, but another requisite of architectural composition would have been fulfilled, inasmuch as one of the three members would visibly have predominated over the others; whereas now the three are too nearly equal. It is quite true that the prolongation of the pilasters through two more stories would have made them spindle quite intolerably, but in any case they are rather superfluous and impertinent, and it would have decorated the fronts to omit them. The accentuation of vertical lines by extraneous features is not precisely what is needed in a twelve-story building of these dimensions. In these points, however, there is no departure from the spirit of commercial architecture. That occurs here, not in detail, but in the general scheme that gives the building its picturesqueness of outline. The corbelled turret at the angle makes more eligible the rooms its openings light, but the steep gabled roofs which this turret unites and dominates plainly enough fail to utilize to the utmost the spaces they enclose, and so far violate the conditions of commercial architecture. It seems ungracious to find fault with them on that account, they are so successfully studied in mass and in detail, and the group they make with the turret is so spirited and effective; but nevertheless they evidently do not belong to an office building, and, to borrow the expression of a Federal judge upon a famous occasion, their very picturesqueness is aliunde.

We have been speaking, of course, of the better commercial edifices, and it is by no means to be inferred that Chicago does not contain "elevator buildings" as disunited and absurd and restless as those of any other

CORNER OF INSURANCE EXCHANGE.

Burnham & Root, Architects.

American town. About these select few, also, there is nothing especially characteristic. They might be in New York, or Boston, or Philadelphia, for any local color that they exhibit. It is otherwise with the commercial buildings designed by Messrs. Burnham & Root. With the striking exception of Mr. Richardson's Field Building, the names of these designers connote what there is of characteristically Chicagoan in the architecture of the business streets, so that, after all, the individuality is not local, but personal. The untimely and deplorable death of John Wellborn Root makes it proper to say that the individuality was mainly his. It consists largely in a clearer perception than one finds elsewhere of the limitations and conditions of commercial architecture, or in a more austere and self-denying acting upon that perception. This is the quality that such towering structures as the Insurance Exchange, the Phœnix Building, and "The Rookery" have in common, and that clearly distinguishes them from the mass of commercial palaces in Chicago or elsewhere. There is no sacrifice to picturesqueness of the utilitarian purpose in their general form, as in the composition of the Owings Building, and no denial of it in detail, as in the irrelevant arcade of the Studebaker Building. Their flat roofs are not tormented into protuberances in order to animate their sky-lines, and those of them that are built around an interior court are frankly hypæthral. Nor is there in any of them any incongruous preciousness of material. They are of brick, brown or red, upon stone basements, and the ornament is such, and only such, as is needed to express and to emphasize the structural divisions and dispositions. These are negative merits, it is true, but as our commercial architecture goes, they are not less meritorious on that account, and one is inclined to wish that the

architects of all the commercial palaces might attend to the preachments upon the fitness of things that these edifices deliver, for they have very positive merits also. They are all architectural compositions, and not mere walls promiscuously pierced with openings, or, what is much commoner, mere ranges of openings scantily framed in strips of wall. They are sharply and unmistakably divided into the parts that every building needs to be a work of architecture, the members that mark the division are carefully and successfully adjusted with reference to their place and their scale, and the treatment of the different parts is so varied as to avoid both monotony and miscellany. The angle piers, upon the visible sufficiency of which the effectiveness, especially of a lofty building, so largely depends, never fail in this sufficiency, and the superior solidity that the basement of any building needs as a building, when it cannot be attained in fact by reason of commercial exigencies, is suggested in a more rugged and more massive treatment not less than in the employment of a visibly stronger material. These dispositions are aided by the devices at the command of the architect. The angle piers are weighted to the eye by the solid corbelled pinnacles at the top, as in the Insurance Exchange and the Rookery, or stiffened by a slight withdrawal that gives an additional vertical line on each side of the arris, as in the Phœnix, while the same purpose is partly subserved in the Rookery by the projection from the angle of the tall metallic lantern standards that repeat and enforce this line. The lateral division of the principal fronts is similar in all three structures. A narrow central compartment is distinguished in treatment, by an actual projection or by the thickening of the pier, from the longer wings, while the coincidence of this central division with the

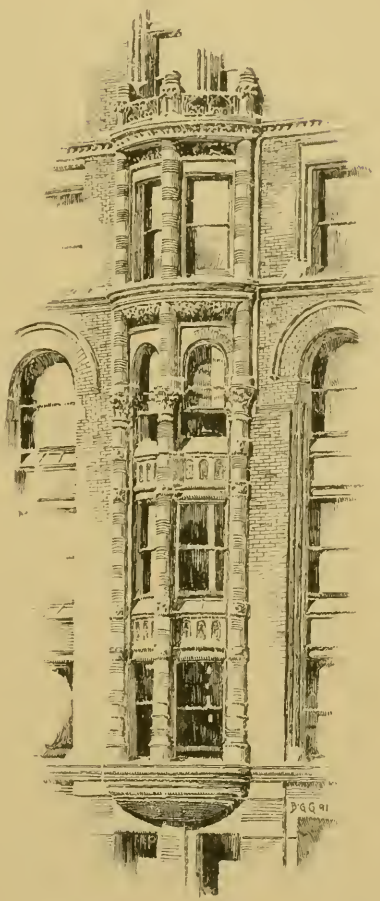
main entrance relieves the arrangement from the unpleasant look of an arrangement obviously forced or arbitrary. In the Insurance Exchange the centre is signalized by a balconied projection over the entrance, extending through the architectural basement—the dado, so to speak, which is here the principal division; by a widening of the pier and a concentration of the central openings in the second division, and above by an interruption of the otherwise unbroken arcade that

ENTRANCE TO THE PHŒNIX BUILDING.

Burnham & Root, Architects.

traverses the attic. In the Rookery it is marked by a slight projection, which above is still further projected into tall corbelled pinnacles, and the wall thus bounded is slightly bowed, and its openings diminished and multiplied. In the Phœnix Building this bowing is carried so much further as to result in a corbelled oriel, extending through four stories, and repeated on a smaller scale at each end of the principal front and in the centre of each shorter front. This feature may perhaps be excepted from the general praise the buildings deserve of a strict adherence to their utilitarian purpose. Not that even in Chicago a business man may not have occasion to look out of the window, nor that, if he does, he may not be pardoned for desiring to extend his view beyond the walls and windows of over the way. An oriel-window is not necessarily an incongruity in a "business block," but the treatment of these oriels is a little fantastic and a little ornate for their destination, and belongs rather to domestic than to commercial architecture, and it is not in any case fortunate. This is the sole exception, however, to be made on this score. The entrances, to be sure, are enriched with a decoration beyond the mere expression of the structure which has elsewhere been the rule, but they do not appear incongruous. The entrance to a building that houses the population of a considerable village must be wide, and if its height were regulated by that of the human figure it would resemble the burrow by which the Esquimau gains access to his snow-hut, and become a manifest absurdity as the portal of a ten-story building. It must be large and conspicuous, and it should be stately, and it were a "very cynical asperity" to deny to the designer the privilege of enhancing by ornament the necessary stateliness of the one feature of his building which must arrest, for a moment at least, the attention of the most

preoccupied visitor. It cannot be said that such a feature as the entrance of the Phœnix Building is intensely characteristic of a modern business block, but it can be said that in its place it does not in the least disturb the impression the structure makes of a modern business block. If beauty be its own excuse for being, this entrance needs no other, for assuredly it is one of the most beautiful and artistic works that American architecture has to show, so admirably proportioned it is, and so admirably detailed, so clear and emphatic without exaggeration is the expression of the structure, and so rich and refined the ornament. Upon the whole these buildings, by far the most successful and impressive of the business buildings of Chicago, not merely attest the skill of their architects, but reward their self-denial in making the design for a commercial building out of its own elements, however unpromising these may seem; in permitting the building, in a word, to impose its design upon them and in following its indications, rather



ORIEL, PHŒNIX BUILDING.
Burnham & Root, Architects.

than in imposing upon the building a design derived from anything but a consideration of its own requirements. Hence it is that, without showing anywhere any strain after originality, these structures are more original than structures in which such a strain is evident. "The merit of originality is not novelty; it is sincerity." The designer did not permit himself to be diverted from the problem in hand by a consideration of the irrelevant beauties of Roman theatres, or Florentine palaces, or Flemish town-halls, and accordingly the work is not reminiscent of these nor of any previous architectural types, of which so many contemporary buildings have the air of being adaptations under extreme difficulties. It is to the same directness and sincerity in the attempt to solve a novel problem that these buildings owe what is not their least attraction, in the sense they convey of a reserved power. The architect of a commercial palace seems often to be discharging his architectural vocabulary and wreaking his entire faculty of expression upon that contradiction in terms. Some of the buildings of which we have been speaking exhibit this prodigality. There is something especially grateful and welcome in turning from one of them to a building like one of those now in question, which suggests by comparison that, after he had completed the design of it, the architect might still have had something left—in his portfolios and in his intellect.

In considering the domestic architecture of Chicago it is necessary to recur to the topographical conditions, for these have had as marked an influence upon it as they have had upon the commercial quarter, although this influence operates in almost the opposite direction. The commercial centre—the quarter of wholesale traffic and of "high finance"—is huddled into the space

between the lake and the river. But when this limit is once passed there is no natural limit. No longer pent up, the whole boundless continent is Chicago's, and the instinct of expansion is at liberty to assert itself in every direction but the east, where it is confronted by Lake Michigan. There is thus no east side in Chicago to supplement the north and the west and the south sides, among which the dwellings of the people are divided, but there is no natural obstacle whatsoever to the development of the city in these three directions, and no natural reason why it should expand in one rather than in another except what is again furnished by the lake. To the minority of people, who live where they will and not where they must, this is a considerable exception, and one would suppose that the fashionable quarter would be that quarter from which the lake is most accessible. This is distinctly enough the north side, which a stranger, without the slightest interest, present or prospective, in Chicago real estate, may be pardoned for inferring to be the most desirable for residence. For it happens that the dwellers upon the south side are cut off from any practical or picturesque use of the lake by the fact that the shore to the south of the city is occupied by railroad tracks, and the nearest houses of any pretensions are turned away from the water, of which only the horses stabled in the rear are in a position to enjoy the view. The inference that the north is the most eligible of the sides one finds to be violently combated by the residents of the south and the west, and he finds also that, instead of one admittedly fashionable quarter, as in every other city, Chicago has three claimants for that distinction. Each of these quarters has its centre and its dependencies, and between each two there is a large area either unoccupied, or occupied with dwellings very much humbler than those that line

the avenues that are severally the boasts of the competing sides. The three appear to have received nearly equal shares of municipal attention, for there is a park for each—nay, there are three parks for the west side, though these are thus far well beyond the limit of fashion if not of population, and nominally two for the south side, though even these bear more the relation to the quarter for which they were provided that the Central Park bore to New York in 1870 than that which it bears in 1891. They are still, that is to say, rather outlying pleasure-grounds accessible to excursionists than parks in actual public use. Lincoln Park, the park of the north side, is the only one of the parks of Chicago that as yet deserves this description, and the north side is much to be congratulated upon possessing such a resort. It has the great advantage of an unobstructed frontage upon the lake, and it is kept with the same skill and propriety with which it was planned.

It will be evident from all this that in the three residential quarters of Chicago there is plenty of room, and it is this spaciousness that gives a pervading characteristic to its domestic architecture. The most fashionable avenues are not filled with the serried ranks of houses one expects to see in a city of a million people. On the contrary, in Michigan Avenue and Prairie Avenue, on the south side, and in the corresponding streets in the other quarters, there is commonly a considerable strip of sward in front of the house, and often at the sides as well. The houses are often completely or partly detached, and they are frequently of a generous breadth, and always of a moderate height. Three stories is the limit, which is rarely exceeded even in the costliest dwellings. Conditions so different prevail in all the Eastern cities, even in Philadelphia, the roominess of which is one of its sources of local pride, that to the inhabit-

ant of any one of them the domestic building of Chicago indicates a much less populous city than Chicago is, and its character seems rather suburban than urban. In the main, this character of suburbanity is heightened by the architectural treatment of the dwellings. There are exceptions, and some of them are conspicuous and painful exceptions; but the rule is that the architect attempts to make the house even of a rich man look like a home rather than like a palace, and that there is very little of the mere ostentation of riches. Even upon the speculative builder this feeling seems to have imposed itself; and however crude and violent his work may be in other ways, it does not very often offend in this particular direction. The commercial palace against which we have been inveighing is by no means so offensive as the domestic sham palace, and from this latter offence Chicago is much freer than most older American cities. The grateful result is that the houses in the best quarters are apt to look eminently "livable;" and though inequalities of fortune are visible enough, there is not so visible as to be conspicuous any attempt of the more fortunate to force them on the notice of the less fortunate. In other words, Chicago is, in its outward aspect at least, the most democratic of great American cities, and its aspect increases one's wonder that anarchism should have sprung up in this rich and level soil—to which, of course, the answer is that it didn't, being distinctly an exotic.

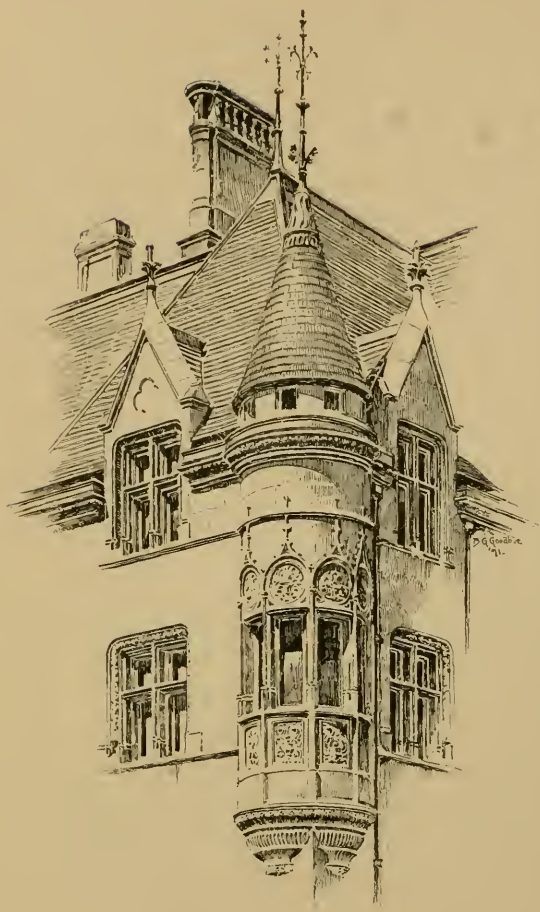
Another characteristic of the domestic architecture of Chicago there is—less prevalent than this absence of pretentiousness and mere display, but still prevalent enough to be very noteworthy—and that is the evidence it affords of an admiration for the work of Mr. Richardson, which, if not inordinate, is at least undiscriminating and misapplied. What region of our land, indeed,

is not full of his labors, done vicariously, and with a zeal not according to knowledge? In Chicago his misunderstood example has fructified much more in the quarters of residence than in the business quarters, insomuch that one can scarcely walk around a square, either in the north or in the south side, without seeing some familiar feature or detail, which has often been

JANUA RICHARDSONIENSIS.

N'Importe Qui, Architect.

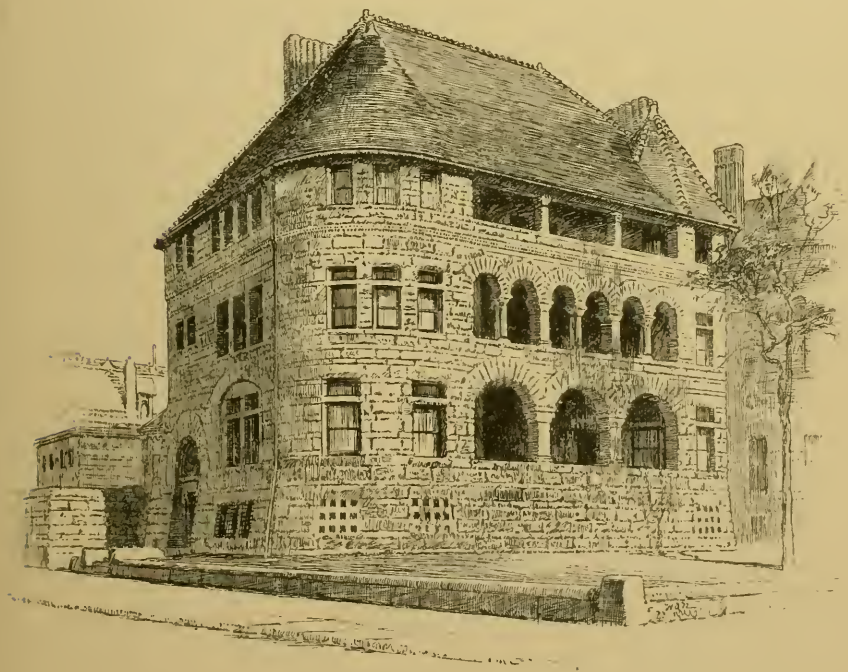
borrowed outright from one of his works, and is reproduced without reference to its context. Now the great and merited success of Richardson was as personal and incommunicable as any artistic success can be. It was due to his faculty of reducing a complicated problem to its simplest and most forcible expression. More specifically, it was due to his faculty for seizing some feature of his building, developing it into predominance, and skilfully subordinating the rest of his composition to it, until this feature became the building. It was his power of disposing masses, his insistence upon largeness and simplicity, his impatience of niggling, his straightforward and virile handling of his tasks, that made his successes brilliant, and even his failures interesting. Very much of all this is a matter of temperament, and Richardson's best buildings were the express images of that impetuous and exuberant personality that all who knew him remember. He used to tell of a tourist from Holland in whom admiration for his art had induced a desire to make his acquaintance, and who upon being introduced to him exclaimed: "Oh, Mr. Richardson, how you are like your work!" "Now wasn't that a Dutch remark?" Richardson concluded the story. Indeed, the tact of the salutation must be admitted to have been somewhat Batavian, but it was not without critical value. One cannot conceive of Richardson's work as having been done by an anæmic architect, or by a self-distrustful architect, or by a professor of architecture, faithful as his own professional preparation had been. There is a distinction well recognized in the art to which architecture has more or less plausibly been likened that is no less valid as applied to architecture itself—the distinction between "school music" and "bravura music." If we adopt this distinction, Richardson must be classed among the bravura performers in architecture, who are



ORIEL OF DWELLING.
R. M. Hunt, Architect.

eligible rather for admiration than for study. Assuredly designers will get nothing but good from his work if they learn from it to try for largeness and simplicity, to avoid niggling, and to consider first of all the disposition of their masses. But these are merits that cannot be transferred from a photograph. They are quite independent of a fondness for the Provençal Romanesque, and still more of an exaggeration of the depth of voussoirs and of the dwarfishness of pillars. These things are readily enough imitable, as nearly every block of dwellings in Chicago testifies, but they are scarcely worth imitating. In Richardson's best work there is apt to be some questionable detail, since the success or failure of his building is commonly decided before the consideration of detail arises, and it is this questionable detail that the imitators are apt to reproduce without asking

it any questions. Moreover, it will probably be agreed by most students that Richardson's city houses are, upon the whole, and in spite of some noteworthy exceptions, the least successful of his works. As it happens, there are two of them in Chicago itself, one on the north side and one on the south, and if their author had done nothing else, it is likely that they would be accepted rather as warnings than as examples. The principal front of the former has the simple leading motive that one seldom fails to find in the work of its architect, in the central open loggia of each of its three stories, flanked on each side by an abutment of solid wall, and the apportionment of the front between voids and solids is just and felicitous. Three loggie seem an excessive allow-



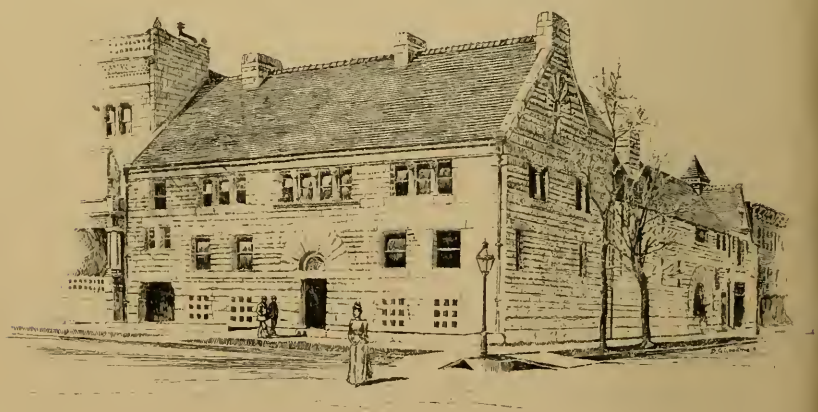
DWELLING IN LAKE SHORE DRIVE.
H. H. Richardson, Architect.

ance for the town-house of a single family; but if we waive this point as an affair between the architect and his client exclusively, it must be owned that the arrangement supplies a motive susceptible of very effective development. In this case it cannot be said to have been developed effectively; nay, it can hardly be said to have been developed in an architectural sense at all, and the result proves that though a skilful disposition of masses is much, it is not everything. We have just been saying that the success or failure of Richardson's work was in a great degree independent of the merit of the detail, but this dwelling scarcely exhibits any detail. This is the more a drawback because the loggia is a feature of which lightness and openness is the essential characteristic, and which seems, therefore, to demand a certain elegance of treatment, as was recognized alike by the architects of the Gothic and the Renaissance palaces in Italy, from which we derive the feature and the name. It is, indeed, in the contrast between the lightened and enriched fenestration of the centre and the massiveness of the flanking walls that the potential effectiveness of the arrangement resides. Here, however, there is no lightening and no enrichment. Rude vigor characterizes as much the enclosed arcades as the enclosing walls, and becomes as much the predominant expression of the front of a dwelling of moderate dimensions as of the huge façades of the Field warehouse. Such modelling as is introduced tends rather to enforce than to mitigate this expression, for the piers of the lower arcade are squared, and the intercalated shafts of the upper are doubled perpendicularly to the front, as are the shafts of the colonnade above, so as to lay an additional stress upon the thickness of a wall that is here manifestly a mere screen. The continuation of the abacus of the arcade through the wall and its reappearance as the transom of the flank-

ing windows is an effective device that loses some of its effectiveness from its introduction into both arcades. It scarcely modifies the impression the front makes of lacking detail altogether. The double-dentilled string-course that marks off and corbels out the attic is virtually the only moulding the front shows. Yet the need of mouldings is not less now than it was in the remote antiquity when a forgotten Egyptian artist perceived the necessity of some expedient to subdivide a wall, to mark a level, to sharpen or to soften a transition. For three thousand years his successors have agreed with him, and for a modern architect to abjure the use of these devices is to deny himself the rhetoric of his art. The incompleteness that comes of this abjuration in the present instance must be apparent to the least-trained layman, who vaguely feels that "something is the matter" with the building thus deprived of a source of expression, for which the texture given to the whole front by the exhibition of the bonding of the masonry, skilful and successful as this is in itself, by no means compensates. The sensitive architect must yearn to set the stone-cutters at work anew to bring out the expression of those parts that are especially in need of rhetorical exposition, to accentuate the sills of the arcades, to define and refine their arches, to emphasize the continuous line of the abacus, and especially to mark the summit of the sloping basement, which now is merged into the plane of the main wall, without the suggestion of a plinth. It is conceivable that an architect might, by the skilful employment of color, so treat a front, without the least projection or recess from top to bottom or from end to end, as to make us forget to deplore the absence of mouldings. Some interesting attempts in that direction have, in fact, been made, and complete success in such an attempt would be entitled to the praise of a tour de force.

But when in a monochromatic wall the designer omits the members that should express and emphasize and adorn his structural dispositions without offering any substitute for them, his building will appear, as this dwelling appears, a work merely "blocked out" and left unfinished; and if it be the work of a highly endowed and highly accomplished designer like Richardson, the deficiency must be set down merely as an unlucky caprice. We have been speaking exclusively of the longer front, since it is manifest that the shorter shares its incompleteness, without the partial compensation of a strong and striking composition, which would carry off much unsuccessful detail, though it is not strong enough to carry off the lack of detail, even with the powerful and simple roof that covers the whole—in itself an admirable and entirely satisfactory piece of work.

Capriciousness may with as much justice be charged upon the only other example of Richardson's domestic architecture in Chicago, which, even more than the house we have been considering, arrests attention and prevents apathy. but which also seems even more from



DWELLING IN PRAIRIE AVENUE.
H. H. Richardson, Architect.

the purpose of domestic architecture. Upon the longer though less conspicuous front it lacks any central and controlling motive; and on the shorter and more conspicuous, this motive, about which the architect so seldom leaves the beholder in any doubt, is obscured by the addition at one end of a series of openings irrelevant to it, having no counterpart upon the other, and serving to weaken at a critical point the wall, the emphasis of whose massiveness and lateral expanse may be said to be the whole purport of the design, to which everything else is quite ruthlessly sacrificed. For this the building is kept as low as possible, insomuch that the ridge of its rather steep roof only reaches the level of the third story of the adjoining house. For this the openings are diminished in size upon both sides, insomuch that they become mere orifices for the admission of light, and in number upon the long side, insomuch that the designer seems to regard them as annoying interruptions to his essay in the treatment of blank wall. A granite wall over a hundred and fifty feet long, as in the side of this dwelling, almost unbroken, and with its structure clearly exhibited, is sure enough to arrest and strike the beholder; and so is the shorter front, in which the same treatment prevails, with a little more of ungracious concession to practical needs in the more numerous openings; but the beholder can scarcely accept the result as an eligible residence. The treatment is, even more strictly than in the house on the north side, an exposition of masonry. There is here, to be sure, some decorative detail in the filling of the head of the doorway and in the sill above it, but this detail is so minute, in the case of the egg-and-dart that adorns the sill, so microscopic, that it does not count at all in the general effect. A moulding that does count in the general effect, and that vindicates itself at the expense of the

structural features not thus developed, is the main cornice, an emphatic and appropriate profile. In this building there seems to be a real attempt to supply the place of mouldings by modifications of the masonry, which in the other forms an unvaried reticulation over the whole surface. In this not only are the horizontal joints accentuated, and the vertical joints slurred so as to assist very greatly in the emphasis of length, but the courses that are structurally of unusual importance, the sills and lintels of the openings, are doubled in width, thus strongly belting the building at their several levels. Here again a device that needs only to be expressed in modelling to answer an artistic purpose fails to make up for the absence of modelling. The merits of the building as a building, however, are much effaced when it is considered as a dwelling, and the structure ceases to be defensible, except, indeed, in a military sense. The whole aspect of the exterior is so gloomy and forbidding and unhomelike that but for its neighborhood one would infer its purpose to be not domestic, but penal. Lovelace has assured us that "stone walls do not a prison make," but when a building consists as exclusively as possible of bare stone walls, it irresistibly suggests a place of involuntary seclusion, even though minds especially "innocent and quiet" might take it for a hermitage. Indeed, if one were to take it for a dwelling expressive of the character of its inmates, he must suppose it to be the abode of a recluse or of a misanthrope, though when Timon secures a large plot upon a fashionable avenue, and erects a costly building to show his aversion to the society of his kind, he exposes the sincerity of his misanthropical sentiments to suspicion. Assuming that the owner does not profess such sentiments, but is much like his fellow-citizens, the character of his abode must be referred to a whim on the part of his architect—a

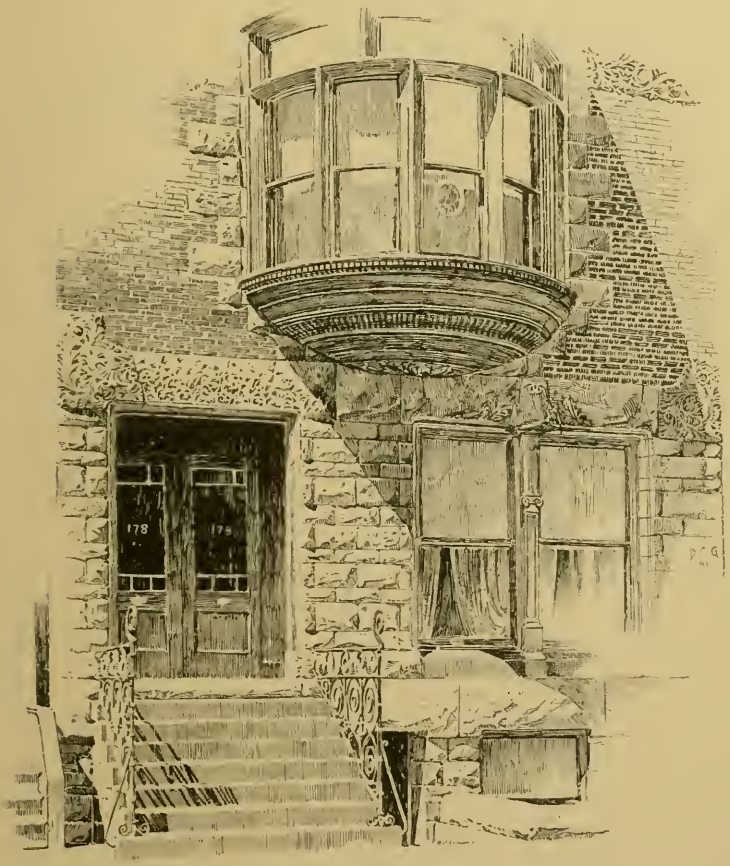
Titanic, or rather a Gargantuan freak. For there is at least nothing petty or puerile about the design of these houses. They bear an unmistakably strong and individual stamp, and failures as, upon the whole, they must be called, they really increase the admiration aroused by their author's successes for the power of design that can make even wilful error so interesting.

That romantic architecture is not inconsistent with the suggestion of a home, or with the conditions of a modern town-house, is shown, if it needed any showing, by a dwelling that adjoins the first of the Richardson houses, and that nobody who is familiar with Mr. W. K. Vanderbilt's house or with the Marquand houses in New York would need to be told was the work of Mr. Hunt. It recalls particularly the Vanderbilt house, being in the same monochrome of light gray, and repeating, though with a wide variation, some of the same features, especially the corbelled tourelle. This is here placed to much better advantage at a salient instead of a reentrant angle; it is more happily proportioned; the corbelling, not continuous, but broken by the wall of the angle, is very cleverly managed, and the whole feature is as picturesque and spirited as it is unmistakably domestic in expression. The house does not exhibit the same profusion of sculptural ornament as the earlier work it recalls, nor is there so much of strictly architectural detail. By this comparison, indeed, one would be inclined to call this treatment severe; but it is prodigality itself in comparison with its neighbor. This latter comparison is especially instructive because in the block, as a matter of mere mass and outline, Mr. Richardson's composition, considerably simpler, is also pretty distinctly more forcible than that of Mr. Hunt, by reason of its central and dominating feature, and especially by reason of the completeness with which it is united

by the simple and unbroken roof; whereas the criticism already passed upon the Vanderbilt house, that it grows weak above the cornice line, is applicable, though in a less degree, to its author's later work. The various roofs required by the substructure, and carried to the same height, have been imperfectly brought into subjection, and their grouping does not make a single or a total impression. Taking the fronts by themselves, considering them with reference to the distribution of voids and solids, we must omit the minor front of Mr. Richardson's work as scarcely showing any composition; but the principal front is much more striking and memorable, doubtless, than either elevation of Mr. Hunt's design, carefully and successfully as both of them have been studied. Yet there is no question at all that the latter is by far the more admirable and effective example of domestic architecture, because the possibilities of expression that inhere in the masses are in the one case brought out, and left latent in the other.

Of course, Mr. Hunt's work is no more characteristically Chicagoan than Mr. Richardson's, and, of course, the dwellings we have been considering are too large and costly to be fairly representative of the domestic architecture of any city. The rule, to which there are as few exceptions in Chicago as elsewhere, is that architecture is regarded as a superfluity that only the rich can afford; whereas a genuine and general interest in it would require the man who was able to own a house at all to insist upon what the tailors call a "custom-made" dwelling, and would lead him equally to reject a ready-made residence and a misfit. In that case we should see in single houses of moderate size and moderate cost the same evidence of affectionate study as in houses of greater pretensions, even though the design might be evinced only in the careful and thoughtful proportion-

ing and adjustment of the parts. This is still a sight as rare as it is welcome in any American city, though it is less rare in cities of the second and third class than in cities of the first. Chicago has its share, but no more than its share, of instances in which the single street front of a modest dwelling has been thought worthy of all the pains that could be given to it. Of one such instance in Chicago an illustration is given, and it is somewhat saddening to one who would like to find in it

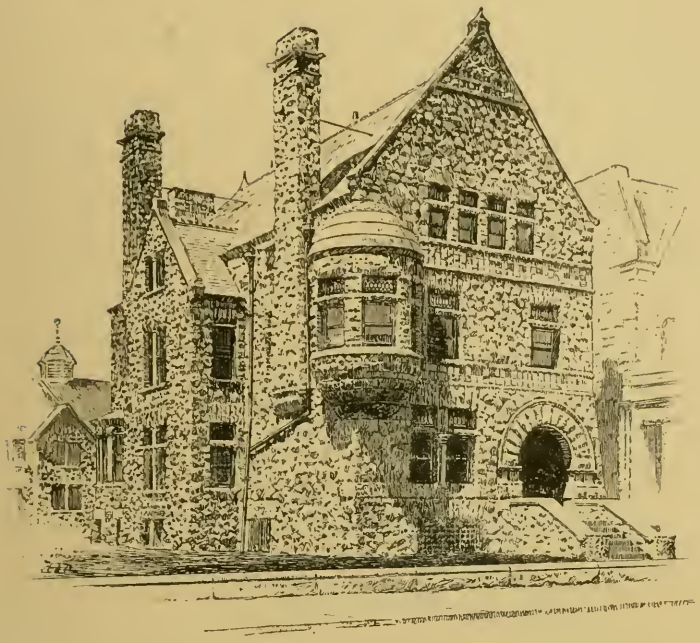


FRONT IN DEARBORN AVENUE.
John Addison, Architect.

an evidence of intelligent lay interest in architecture to be informed that it is the residence of its architect.

Upon the whole, the domestic architecture of the town has few local characteristics, besides those already mentioned, which are due to local conditions rather than to local preferences. The range of building material is wide, and includes a red sandstone from Lake Superior that has not yet made its way into the Eastern cities, of a more positive tint than any in general use there. On the other hand, the whole continent has been laid under tribute for Chicago. The green "Chester serpentine" which one encounters so often in Philadelphia—and generally with regret, though in combination it may become very attractive—quite unknown in New York as it is, is not uncommon in the residential quarters of Chicago. Another material much commoner here than elsewhere is the unhewn bowlder that Mr. Richardson employed in the fantastic lodge at North Easton, which was one of his happiest performances. In a long and low structure like that the defects of the material are much less manifest than when it is attempted to employ it in a design of several stories. One of the most interesting of these attempts is illustrated herewith. The architect has wisely simplified his design to the utmost to conform to the intractability of his material, and with equal wisdom has marked with strong belts the division of his stories. But in spite of its ruggedness the wall looks weak, since it is plain that there is no bonding, and that it is not properly a piece of masonry, but a layer of highly magnified concrete, which owes its stability only to the cohesion of the cement, and to give the assurance of being a trustworthy wall needs to be framed in a conspicuous quoining of unquestionable masonry.

One other trait is common enough among such of the dwellings of Chicago as have architectural pretensions to

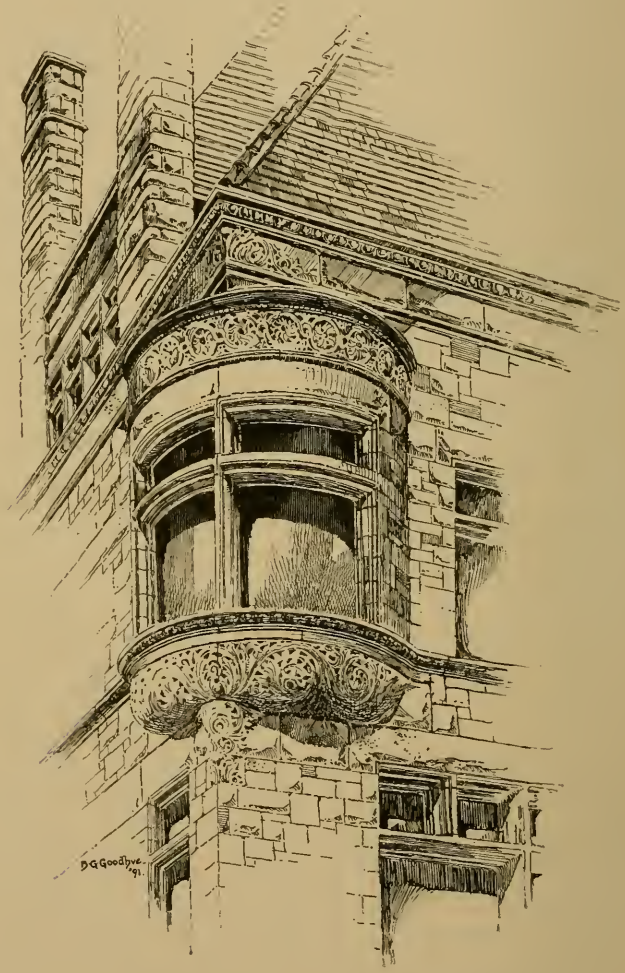


A HOUSE OF BOWLDERS.
Burnham & Root, Architects.

be remarked, and that is the prevalence of Byzantine carving. This is not really a Chicagoan characteristic. If it is especially noticeable here, it is because Chicago is so new, and it is in the newer quarters of older towns that it is to be seen. It is quite as general on the "West side" of New York. Its prevalence is again in great part due to the influence of Richardson, and one is inclined to welcome it as at least tending to provide a common and understood way of working for architectural carvers, and the badge of something like a common style for buildings that have little else in common. The facility with which its spiky leafage can be used for surface decoration tempts designers to provide surfaces for its decoration, in such structural features as capitals and corbels, at the cost of the modelling which is so much more ex-

pressive and so much more troublesome, when a mere cushion will do better as a basis for Byzantine ornament.

For the rest, the clever and ingenious features which one often comes upon in the residential streets of Chicago, and the thoroughly studied fronts that one comes



A BYZANTINE CORBEL.
Henry Ives Cobb, Architect.

upon so much more seldom, would excite neither more nor less surprise if they were encountered in the streets of any older American town. But from what has been said it will be seen that in every department of building, except only the ecclesiastical, Chicago has already examples to show that should be of great value to its future growth in stimulating its architects to produce and in teaching its public to appreciate.

GLIMPSES OF WESTERN ARCHITECTURE

II.—ST. PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS

IT is just thirty years since Anthony Trollope ascended the Mississippi to the head of navigation and the Falls of St. Anthony, and recorded his impressions of the works of nature and of man along the shores of that river. As might perhaps have been expected, he admired with enthusiasm the works of nature, and as might certainly have been expected, he found little to admire in the handiwork of man. "I protest that of all the river scenery that I know, that of the upper Mississippi is by far the finest and the most continued. One thinks, of course, of the Rhine; but, according to my idea of beauty, the Rhine is nothing to the upper Mississippi. . . . The idea constantly occurs that some point on every hill-side would form the most charming site ever yet chosen for a noble residence." Thus Trollope of the upper Mississippi, and thus again of the "twin cities" that are the subject of our present inquisition: "St. Paul contains about 14,000 inhabitants, and, like all other American towns, is spread over a surface of ground adapted to the accommodation of a very extended population. As it is belted on one side by the river, and on the other by the bluffs which accompany the course of the river, the site is pretty, and almost romantic." The other "twin" is so much the later born that to few Minneapolitans does it ever occur that it had even seen the

light in 1861. "Going on from Minnehaha, we came to Minneapolis, at which place there is a fine suspension-bridge across the river, just above the Falls of St. Anthony, and leading to the town of that name. Till I got there I could hardly believe that in these days there should be a living village called Minneapolis by living men. I presume I should describe it as a town, for it has a municipality and a post-office, and of course a large hotel. The interest of the place, however, is in the saw-mills."

I do not mean to celebrate again the growth of St. Paul and Minneapolis from these small beginnings, which is the marvel of even the marvellous West. But for our immediate purpose it is necessary to bear in mind not only the rapidity of the growth of the two cities, but the intensity of the rivalry between them—a rivalry which the stranger hardly comprehends, however much he may have heard of it, until he has seen the workings of it on the spot. Indeed, it is scarcely accurate to describe the genesis of Minneapolis, in particular, as a growth at all. St. Paul has been developed from the frontier trading-post of the earlier days by an evolution, the successive stages of which have left their several records; but Minneapolis has risen like an exhalation, or, to adopt even a mustier comparison, has sprung from the heads of its projectors full-panoplied in brick and mortar. "The twin cities on either bank," remarks the historiographer of the Minneapolis Exposition of 1886, "amid many ups and downs—the ups always predominating—pegged along steadily towards greatness." The phrase is rather picturesque than graphic, for nothing could be less descriptive of the mode of locomotion of Minneapolis than a steady pegging along. It has been an affair of leaps and bounds. There are traces of the village that Trollope saw, and there are the towering structures of a mod-

ern city, and there is nothing between. In this electric air, where there is so little "precipitation" in the atmosphere and so much in everything else; where "the flux of mortal things" is not a generalization of the mind, but a palpable fact of daily experience; where antiquity means the day before yesterday, and posterity the day after to-morrow, the present is the most contemptible of tenses, and men inevitably come to think and live and build in the future-perfect. A ten-story building in a ten-acre lot requires explanation, and this seems to be the explanation—this and the adjacency of the hated rival. In St. Paul the elevator came as a needed factor in commercial architecture, since the strip of shore to which the town was confined in Trollope's time still limits and cramps the business-quarter, and leaves only the vertical dimension available for expansion. Towering buildings are the normal outcome of such a situation. Minneapolis, on the other hand, occupies a table-land above the river, which at present is practically unlimited. Although, of course, every growing or grown town must have a most frequented part—a centre where land is costlier than elsewhere, and buildings rise higher—the altitude of the newest and tallest structures of Minneapolis could scarcely be explained without reference to the nearness of St. Paul, and the intensity of the local pride born of that nearness. If the physical necessities of the case prescribed ten-story buildings in St. Paul, the moral necessity of not being outdone would prescribe twelve-story buildings for Minneapolis. In point of fact, it is to a Minneapolitan architect that we owe the first project of an office building which bears the same relation to the ordinary elevator building of our cities that this bears to the five or six story edifice that the topographical and commercial conditions would indicate as suited to the actual needs of Minneapolis. The

project remains on paper, though it is some years since it startled the architects of the country, and an interesting project it is in an architectural sense; but it is none the less representative of the local genius than if it had been executed.

Evidently there could be no better places than the twin cities to study the development of Western architecture, or rather to ascertain whether there is any such thing. There seems to be among the Western lay populations a faith that there is, which is none the less firm for being a trifle vague, and this faith is shared by some of the practitioners of architecture in the West. In the inscrutable workings of our official architecture, one of these gentlemen came to be appointed a few years ago the supervising architect of the Treasury. It is a measure of the extent and intelligence of the national interest in the art that this functionary, with little more than the official status of a clerk, and with no guarantee that he has any professional status whatever, has little less than the ædiliary powers of an Augustus. To have found a city of brick and to have left a city of marble is a boast that more than one supervising architect could have paraphrased in declaring that he found the government architecture Renaissance and he left it Gothic, or that he found it Gothic and he left it nondescript, while each successive incumbent could have declared that he found it and left it without architectural traditions and without architectural restraints. The ambition of the architect immediately in question was not sectarian so much as sectional. To him it seemed that a bureau had too many traditions which to other students seemed to have none at all. Not personally addicted to swearing to the words of any master, he considered that the influence of authority in his office was much too strong. He was himself from the remote West, and in

an interview setting forth his hopes and purposes, shortly after he came into the office from which he was shortly to go out, he explained that "Eastern" conventionalities had had altogether too much sway in the previous conduct of the office, and that he meant to embody "Western ideas" in the public buildings. In the brief interval before his retirement he designed many monuments from which one should be able to derive some notion of Western architectural ideas, and one of these is the government building in Minneapolis. This edifice is mainly remarkable for the multitude of ill-assorted and unadjusted features which it exhibits, especially for the "grand choice" of pediments which its fronts present—pediments triangular and curved, pediments closed and broken—and for the variety and multiplicity of the cupolas and lanterns and crestings by which the sky-line is animated into violent agitation. The features themselves cannot be "Western," since they are by no means novel, the most recent of them dating back to Sir Christopher Wren, and it must be the combination or the remarkable profusion of "things" that constitutes the novelty and the Westernness which it was the mission of the author to introduce into our public architecture. Unfortunately there is nothing that can fairly be called combination, for the composition is but an agglomeration, "a fortuitous concourse of atoms." We have all seen in the Eastern cities too many buildings of which crudity and recklessness were the characteristics, and which were unstudied accumulations of familiar forms, to assume that crudity and recklessness in architecture are especially "Western ideas." If they be so, then assuredly "Western" is an opprobrious epithet, not lightly and unadvisedly to be applied to any structure.

There is perhaps no other building in either city

equally costly and conspicuous which merits it in the same degree with the government building at Minneapolis, at least in an architectural sense. An enterprising owner in the same city has procured the materials for a new building by permitting each contributor to inscribe his contribution with the name of the material furnished by him, and a statement of its good qualities, and these incised advertisements undoubtedly give a local color to the structure; but this Westernness is scarcely architectural. The City Hall and Court-house in St. Paul is a large and conspicuous building, the more conspicuous for being isolated in the midst of an open square; and it is unfortunate in design, or the absence of it, the arrangement of its voids and solids being quite unstudied and casual, and the aggregation quite failing to constitute a whole. There are by no means so many features in it as in the government building at Minneapolis, nor are they classic; but the architect has introduced more "things" than he was able to handle, and they are equally irrelevant to the pile and to each other, especially the tower that was intended to be the culminating feature of the composition, but which fails to fulfil its purpose from any point of view, crowning as it does a recessed angle of the front. This also is a congeries of unrelated and unadjusted parts, and, in the light of the illustrations of his meaning furnished by our official spokesman, this also may be admitted to be characteristically W——n. The same admission may reluctantly be made concerning the Chamber of Commerce in St. Paul, which consists architecturally of two very busy and bustling fronts, compiled of "features" that do not make up a physiognomy, and which stand upon a massive sash frame of plate-glass. As a matter of fact, these things have their counterparts in the East, only there they are not referred to the geography, but to the illit-

cracy or insensibility of the designer, and this classification seems simpler, and, upon the whole, more satisfactory.

Minneapolis has a compensation for its newness in the fact that when its public buildings came to be projected, the fashion of such edifices as these had passed away. If the work of Mr. Richardson has been much misunderstood, as I tried to point out in speaking of the domestic architecture of Chicago, if its accidents have been mistaken by admiring disciples for its essence, even if its essential and admirable qualities do not always suffice to make it available as a model, it is necessary only to consider such buildings as have just been mentioned to perceive how beneficial, upon the whole, his influence has been, for it has at least sufficed to make such buildings impossible—impossible, at least, to be done by architects who have any pretensions to be "in the movement"—and it is hard to conceive that they can be succeeded by anything so bad. The City Hall of Minneapolis, for instance, was projected but a few years later than its government building, but in the interval Richardson's influence had been at work. That influence is betrayed both in the accepted design now in course of execution and in the other competitive designs, and it has resulted in a specific resemblance to the public building at Pittsburgh, which its author professed his hope to make "a dignified pile of rocks." The variations which the authors of the Minneapolis City Hall have introduced in the scheme they have reproduced in its general massing, and in its most conspicuous features are not all improvements. By the introduction of grouped openings into its solid shaft the tower of Pittsburgh is shorn of much of its power; nor can the substitution be commended in its upper stage of a modification of the motive employed by Richardson in Trinity,

Boston, and derived by him from Salamanca, for the simpler treatment used in the prototype of this building as the culminating feature of a stark and lofty tower. The far greater elaboration of the corner pavilions of the principal fronts, also, though in part justified by the greater tractability of the material here employed, tends rather to confusion than to enrichment. On the other hand, the more subdued treatment of the curtain wall between the tower and the pavilions gives greater value and detachment to both, and is thus an advance upon the prototype; and the central gable of the subordinate front is distinctly more successful than the corresponding feature of Pittsburgh, the archway, withdrawn between two protecting towers, of which the suggestion comes from mediæval military architecture. Observe, however, that the derivation of the general scheme of the building and of its chief features from an earlier work is by no means an impeachment of the architect's originality, provided the precedent he chooses be really applicable to his problem, and provided he analyze it instead of reproducing it without analysis. In what else does progress consist than in availing one's self of the labor of one's predecessors? If the Grecian builders had felt the pressure of the modern demand for novelty, and had endeavored to comply with it by making dispositions radically new, instead of refining upon the details of an accepted type, or if the mediæval builders had done the same thing, it is manifest that the typical temple or the typical cathedral would never have come to be built, that we should have had no Parthenon and no Cologne. The requirements of the Minneapolis building, a court-house and town-hall, are nearly enough alike to those of the county building at Pittsburgh to make it credible that the general scheme of the earlier work may, by force of merit, have imposed itself upon the architect

PUBLIC LIBRARY, MINNEAPOLIS.
Long & Kees, Architects.

of the later. The general difference of treatment is the greater richness and elaboration of the newer structure, and this is a legitimate consequence of the substitution of freestone for granite; while the differences of detail and the introduction at Minneapolis of features that have no counterpart at Pittsburgh suffice to vindicate the designer from the reproach of having followed his model thoughtlessly or with servility. So far as can be judged from the drawings, the municipal building of Minneapolis, when it comes to be finished, will be a monument of which the Minneapolitans will have a right to be proud, for better reasons than mere magnitude and costliness.

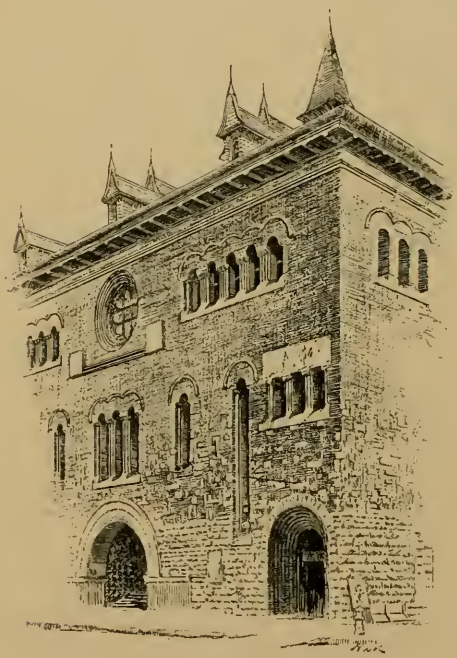
Another work, this time completely executed, by the designers of the City Hall, the Public Library of Minneapolis, betrays also the influence of Richardson. The motive of the principal front, an arcade bounded by round towers and surmounted by a story of blank wall, was pretty evidently suggested by his unexecuted de-

sign for a similar building at Buffalo. The precedent here is perhaps not so directly in point, seeing that the effectiveness of an arcade increases with its length, and in a much greater ratio, and that the arcade here is not only much shorter than in the projected building, but is still further shortened to the eye by being heightened and carried through two stories. The towers, too, would have been more effective had it been practicable to give greater solidity to their lower stages. Nevertheless, the building is distinctly successful, and its most successful

ENTRANCE TO PUBLIC LIBRARY, MINNEAPOLIS.

feature, the gabled centre that includes the entrance, is one which illustrates the inventiveness of the designers, as well as their power of judicious selection and modification.

As was remarked in the paper on Chicago, the architectural activity of the West is not largely ecclesiastical, and the churches are for the most part as near to traditional models as their designers have the knowledge to bring them. In the Eastern States a great many interesting essays have been made towards solving the modern problem of a church in which the pulpit and not the altar is the central point of design, while yet retaining an ecclesiastical expression. There is an edifice in St. Paul called "the People's Church," in which the designer seems purposely to have avoided an ecclesiastical expression, and to have undertaken to typify in brick and stone the wild, free theology of the West. He has so far succeeded that nobody could possibly take the result of his labors for a church in the usual acceptation of the term, but this negative attainment does not yet constitute a positive architectural success. It may be that Western ideas in theology are thus far somewhat too sketchy to form a



THE PEOPLE'S CHURCH, ST. PAUL.
J. W. Stevens, Architect.

basis for the establishment of an architectural type, since mere negation is insusceptible of architectural expression. The People's Church does not lack, however, many of the qualities that should belong to every building as a building, apart from its destination. In spite of such unhappy freaks as that by which the stone basement merges into the brick superstructure with no architectural mark of the transition, and cuts the openings quite at random, or as that by which the brick wall, for a considerable but indefinite extent, is quite promiscuously aspersed with irregular bits of stone, it shows a considerable skill in the placing and detailing of features, and the disposition of the openings gives the principal front a grateful sense of stability and repose. The ample entrances designate it as a place of popular assembly, and possibly its religious purpose may be taken to be confessed, though somewhat shamefacedly, in the wheel-window at the centre of one front, and the tall traceried opening at the centre of the other, which are the only relics of ecclesiastical architecture that are suffered to appear. It is evident that it is a "People's" something, and possibly this is as near to a specification of its purpose as the neo-theologians have attained. In this case, as it is notoriously difficult for a man to give expression to an idea of which he is not possessed, the architectural ambiguity is assuredly not to be imputed to the architect.

A Unitarian church in Minneapolis is also an unconventional specimen of church architecture, though it could not be taken for anything but a church, and it is undeniably a vigorous performance, consisting of massive, well-divided, and "well-punched" walls in a monochrome of dark-red sandstone. The novelty and the unconventionality, however, seem, both in composition and in detail, to have been sought rather than

UNITARIAN CHURCH, MINNEAPOLIS.
L. S. Buffington, Architect.

to have proceeded from the conditions of the problem, and the effect is so far marred by the loss of the naturalness and straightforwardness that justify a departure from convention. For example, even in a galleried church the division into two stories can scarcely be considered the primary fact of the building, though this division is the primary fact of this design, and is emphasized by the torus that is the most conspicuous moulding. Nevertheless, there is much felicity in the general disposition and in the design of the features, especially in the open fenestration of the transept gable, and its strong contrast with the solider flanks of wall pierced only by the smaller openings that indicate the gallery staircases, the slope of which is also expressed in the masonry of the wall itself; and the low polygonal tower effectually unites and dominates the two fronts. The innovation in the treatment of detail, by which

what is commonly the "wrought work" of a building in facile sandstone is left rough-faced, is a caprice that seems also to proceed from the pursuit of novelty, and that gains nothing in vigor for what it loses in refinement. A rough-faced moulding seems to be a contradiction in terms; yet here not only are the mouldings rough-faced, but also the columns and colonnettes, and the corbelled pinnacles that detach the tower and the gables, and it is only in the copings of these that the asperities of the sandstone are mitigated. Slovenliness is not vigor, and in the coarsening of this detail the designer, in spite of having produced a vigorous and interesting work, exposes himself to the critical amenity bestowed by Dryden upon Elkanah Settle, that "his style is boisterous and rough-hewn."

A more conventional and a quite unmistakable example of church building is a Presbyterian church in St. Paul, which follows the established ecclesiastical type, albeit with a recognition of the modern demand that a church shall be a good place in which to preach and to be preached to—a demand which here, as often elsewhere, is met by shortening the arms of the cruciform plan until the church is virtually limited to the crossing. It is no disparagement to the present design to say that in its general composition it seems to have been suggested by—and at any rate it suggests—an early and interesting work of Mr. Richardson's, a church in Springfield, Massachusetts, upon which it improves at some points, notably in the emphatic exposition of the masonic structure. At other points the variation is not so successful. The tower at Springfield, with its attached turret, the entrance arch at its base, and the broach spire with pinnacles detached over the squinches, is a very vigorous piece of design. In the corresponding feature at St. Paul, the relation between the two

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ST. PAUL.
Gilbert & Taylor, Architects.

superposed open stages is not rhythmic or felicitous, though each in itself is well modelled, and the transition from the tower to the shingled spire, marked by shingled pinnacles without a parapet, is distinctly unfortunate. For all that, the church is a studied and scholarly performance.

In the material and materializing development of the West, it is not surprising that the chief object of local pride should not be the local church, but the local hotel. "Of course a large hotel" is now, as in Trollope's time,

a necessary ingredient of a local "boom." In respect of architecture the large hotel of Minneapolis has a decided advantage over the large hotel of St. Paul. For the caravansary of the older town is an example of the kind of secular Victorian Gothic that was stimulated by the erection of Sir Gilbert Scott's Midland Hotel in London, than which a less eligible model could scarcely be put before an untrained designer, since there is little in it to redeem an uneasy and uninteresting design except carefully studied and carefully adjusted detail. This careful study and adjustment being omitted, as they are in the Hotel Ryan, and a multiplicity of features retained and still further confused

WEST HOTEL, MINNEAPOLIS.
L. S. Buffington, Architect.

by a random introduction of color, the result is a bewildering and saltatory edifice which has nothing of interest except the banded piers of the basement. The West Hotel in Minneapolis is a much more considerable structure. It has a general composition, both vertically and laterally, consisting in the former case of three divisions, of which the central is rather the most important, and in the latter of an emphasis of the centre and the ends in each front and of a subordination of the intervening wall. Here, also, there is a multiplicity of features, but they are not so numerous or distributed so much at random as to prevent us from seeing the countenance, for undeniably the building has a physiognomy, and that is in itself an attainment. In artistic quality the features are very various, and the one trait they seem to have in common is a disregard for academic correctness or for purity of style. This is conspicuous in the main entrance, which is perhaps the most effective and successful of them, being a massive and powerful porte-cochère, in which, however, an unmistakably Gothic dwarf column adjoins a panelled pilaster, which as unmistakably owes its origin to the Renaissance, and a like freedom of eclecticism may be observed throughout the building. In its degree this freedom may be Western, though a European architect would be apt to dismiss it indiscriminately as American; whereas an American architect would be more apt to ask himself, with respect to any particular manifestation of it, whether it was really, and not only conventionally, a solecism. In this place the conjunction does not strike one as incongruous, but there are other features in which the incongruity is real, such as the repeated projections of long and ugly corbels to support things that are pretty evidently there mainly for the purpose of being supported. The impregnable

criticism of the Vicar of Wakefield, that the picture would have been better if the artist had taken more pains, is especially applicable to this edifice. It might have been both chastened and clarified by severer study; but it is a compliment to it, as American hotel architecture goes, to wish that it had been more carefully matured by its designer before being irretrievably executed. The interior presents several interesting points of design as well as of arrangement, but perhaps it owes its chief attractiveness to the rich and quiet decoration of those of its rooms that have been intrusted to Mr. Bradstreet, who for many years has been acting as an evangelist of good taste to the two cities, and who for at least the earlier of those years must have felt that he was an evangelist *in partibus*. The interior design and decoration of the opera-house at Minneapolis is a yet more important illustration of his skill; but interiors are beyond our present scope.

For public works other than public buildings, the two cities are not as yet very notable. The site of St. Paul makes a bridge across the river at this point a very conspicuous object, and perhaps nowhere in the world would a noble and monumental bridge be more effective. The existing bridges, however, are works of the barest utility, apparently designed by railroad engineers with no thought of anything beyond efficiency and economy, and they are annoying interruptions to the panorama unrolled to the spectator from the hillside in the shining reach of the great river. Minneapolis has been more fortunate in this respect, although the river by no means plays so important a part in its landscape. The suspension-bridge of Trollope's time has, of course, long since disappeared, having been replaced by another, built in 1876 from the designs of Mr. Griffith, which was a highly picturesque object,

and was perhaps the most satisfactory solution yet attained, though by no means a completely satisfactory solution, of the artistic problem involved in the design of a suspension-bridge; a problem which to most designers of such bridges does not appear to be involved in it at all.* It is very unfortunate that although the Minneapolitans appreciated this structure as one of their chief municipal ornaments, they should, nevertheless, have sacrificed it quite ruthlessly to the need of greater accommodation; whereas there could scarcely have been any insuperable difficulty in moving the site of the new bridge that the new exigencies demanded so that the old might be preserved. In another respect, Minneapolis has derived a great advantage from the capacity and the necessity of taking long views that are imposed upon her people by the conditions of their lives. This is the reservation, at the instigation of a few provident and public-spirited citizens, of the three lakes that lie in the segment of a circle a few miles inland from the existing city, and of the strip of land connecting them. Even now, with little improvement beyond road-making, the circuit of the future parks is a delightful drive; and when Minneapolis shall have expanded until they constitute a bounding boulevard, the value of them as a municipal possession will be quite incalculable.

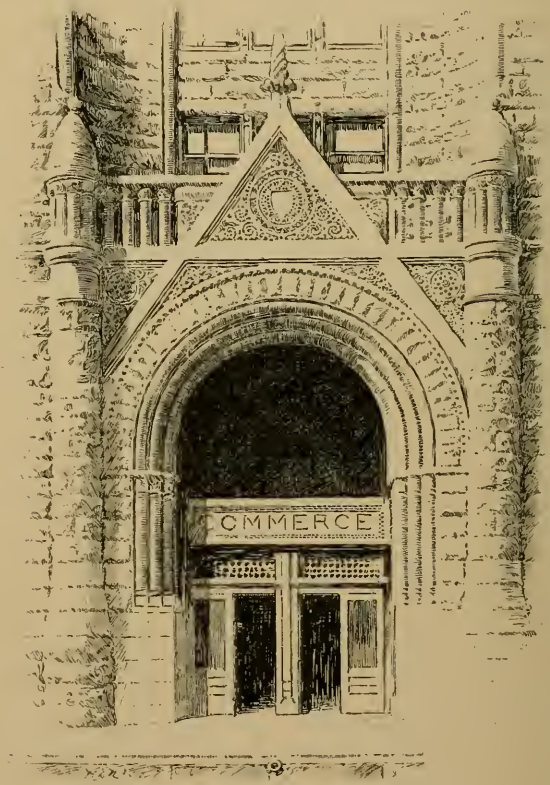
The aspect of the commercial quarters of the two cities has more points of difference than of resemblance. The differences proceed mainly from the fact already noted, that the commercial quarter of St. Paul is cramped as well as limited by the topography, and that it is all coming to be occupied by a serried mass of lofty buildings, whereas the lofty buildings of Minneapolis are still detached objects erected in anticipa-

* See illustration, p. 75.

tion of the pressure for room that has not yet begun to be felt. It is an odd illustration of the local rivalry that although the cities are so near together, the architects are confined to their respective fields, and it is very unusual, if not unexampled, that an architect of either is employed in the other. Such an employment would very likely be resented as incivism. Eastern architects are admitted on occasion as out of the competition, but in the main each city is built according to the plans of the local designers. The individual characteristics of the busiest and most successful architects are thus impressed upon the general appearance of the town, and go to widen the difference due to

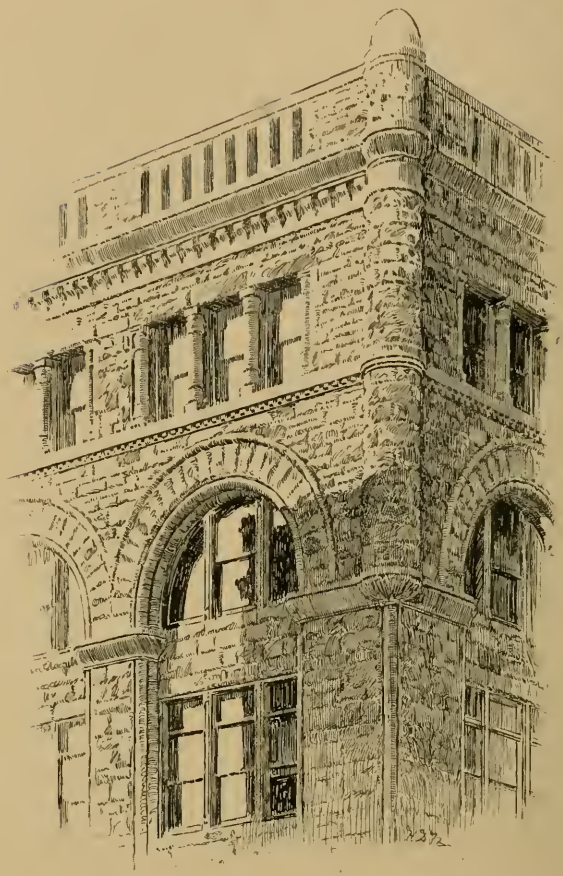
LUMBER EXCHANGE, MINNEAPOLIS.
Long & Kees, Architects.

natural causes. The best examples of commercial architecture in Minneapolis, such as the Bank of Commerce and the Lumber Exchange, before its partial destruction by fire, have the same straightforward and severely business-like character as the buildings designed by Mr. Root in Chicago, and, indeed, they seem to owe not a little to suggestions derived from him. The treatment of the Lumber Exchange, in particular, indicates an admiring study of his work. Here the centre of the front is signalized by projecting shallow oriels carried through the five central stories of the building



ENTRANCE TO BANK OF COMMERCE, MINNEAPOLIS.
Harry W. Jones, Architect.

on each side of the ample opening in each story directly over the entrance, and by flanking this central bay in the upper division with narrow and solid turrets, corbelled and pinnacled. The scheme is not so effectively wrought out as it deserves to be, and as it might be. The central feature is not developed into predominance, and the main divisions of the building are no more emphasized in treatment than the divisions between the intermediate stories. The observer may recur to the Vicar of Wakefield to express his regret that the promise of so promising a scheme should not have been fulfilled, although, in spite of its shortcomings, the result is a respectable "business block." These remarks apply to the original building, and not to the building as it has since been reconstructed by the addition of two stories which throw out the relations of its parts, and make it difficult to decipher the original scheme. The Bank of Commerce is as frankly utilitarian as the Lumber Exchange, the designer having relaxed the restraint imposed upon him by the prosaic and pedestrian character of his problem only in the design of the scholarly and rather ornate entrances. For the rest, the architecture is but the expression of the structure, which is expressed clearly and with vigor. The longer front shows the odd notion of emphasizing the centre by withdrawing it, a procedure apparently irrational, which has, however, the compensation of giving value and detachment to the entrance at its base. The problem was much more promising than that of the Lumber Exchange, seeing that here, with an ample area, there are but six stories against ten, and it is out of all comparison better solved. The four central stories are grouped by piers continued through them and connected by round arches above the fifth, while the first and sixth are sharply separated



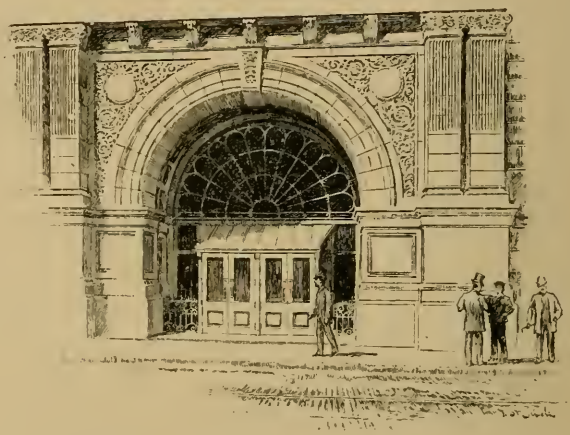
CORNER OF BANK OF COMMERCE, MINNEAPOLIS.

in treatment, the former as an unmistakable basement, with a plain segment-headed opening in each bay, and the latter as an unmistakable attic, with a triplet of lintelled and shafted openings aligned over each of the round arches. The fronts are, moreover, distinguished, without in the least compromising the utilitarian purpose of the structure, by the use of the architectural devices the lack of which one deplores in the other building, insomuch that the difference between the two is the difference between a building merely

blocked out and a finished building, and suggests again that the Lumber Exchange must have been designed under pressure. The building of the "Globe" newspaper, in Minneapolis, is a vigorous composition in Richardsonian Romanesque, excessively broken and diversified, doubtless, for its extent, but with interesting pieces of detail, and with a picturesque angle tower that comes in very happily from several points of view of the business quarter. The emphatic framing of this tower between two plain piers is a noteworthy point of design, and so is the use of the device that emphasizes the angles throughout their whole extent, while still keeping the vertical lines in subordination to the horizontal.

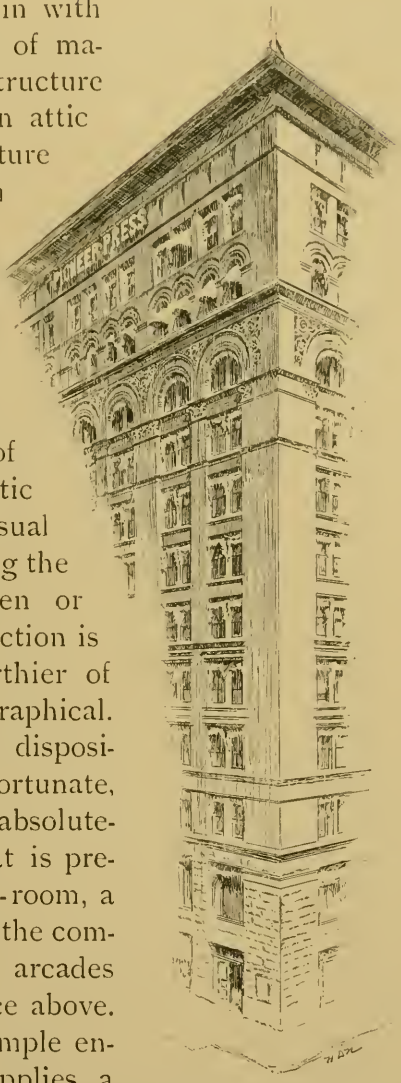
THE "GLOBE" BUILDING, MINNEAPOLIS.
E. Townsend Mix, Architect.

Among the business blocks of St. Paul, the building of the "Pioneer Press" newspaper is eminent for the strictness with which the design conforms itself to the utilitarian conditions of the structure, and the impressiveness of the result attained, not in spite of those apparently forbidding conditions, but by means of them. Here also Mr. Root's buildings, to which this praise belongs in so high a degree, have evidently enough inculcated their lesson upon the designer of the present structure. An uncompromising parallelopiped of brown brick rears



ENTRANCE TO "PIONEER PRESS" BUILDING, ST. PAUL.
S. S. Beman, Architect.

itself to the height of twelve stories, with no break at all in its outline, and with no architecture that is not evolved directly from the requirements of the building. One does not seem to be praising a man very highly to praise him for talking prose when he has a prosaic subject. A mere incompetency to poetry would apparently suffice to earn this moderate eulogy. Yet, in fact, nothing is much rarer in our architecture than the power to deny one's self irrelevant beauties. The "Pioneer Press" building is a basement of three stories, the first story of

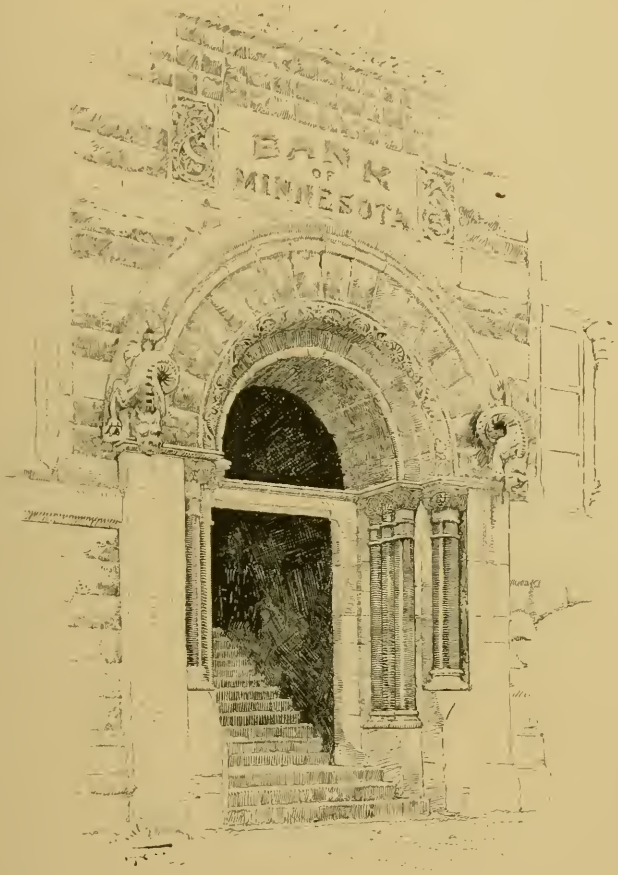


CORNER OF "PIONEER PRESS" BUILDING.

the brick-work counting in with the two-story substructure of masonry, carrying a superstructure of seven, crowned with an attic of two. This latter feature proceeds, doubtless, from the special requirement of a newspaper office superposed upon a business block, and it may be inferred that to this requirement is due the greater enrichment of the lower of the two attic stories, contrary to the usual arrangement, and testifying the architect's belief, mistaken or not, that the editorial function is of more dignity and worthier of celebration than the typographical. At any rate, the unusual disposition is architecturally fortunate, since it provides, in the absolutely plain openings of what is presumably the composing-room, a grateful interval between the comparative richness of the arcades beneath and of the cornice above. In the main front, the ample entrance at the centre supplies a visible motive for the vertical as well as for the subordinate lateral division. It is developed through the three stories of the basement, and it is recognized in a prolongation upward of its flanking piers through the central division—which

is completed by round arches, the spandrels of which are decorated—and through the attic, so as to effect a triple division for the front. The unostentatious devices are highly effective by which the monotony that would result from an identical treatment of the seven central stories is relieved, while the impression made by the magnitude of such a mass is retained. The terminal piers are left entirely unbroken throughout all their extent, except for a continuous string course above the eighth story, which might better have been omitted, since it cuts the intermediate piers very awkwardly, and detracts from the value of the heavier string course only one story higher that has an evident reason of being, as the springing course of the arcade; while the intermediate piers are crossed by string courses above the fifth and the ninth stories, so as to give to the central and dominant feature of the main composition a triple division of its own into a beginning, a middle, and an end.

The building is very successful, and the more successful because the designer has shirked nothing and blinked nothing, but out of this nettle, commercial demands, has plucked this flower, commercial architecture. The same praise of an entire relevancy to its purpose belongs to the Bank of Minnesota, a well-proportioned and well-divided piece of masonry, in spite of more effort at variety in outline, and of somewhat more of fantasy in detail. The former is manifested in the treatment of the roof, in which the gables of the upper story are relieved against a low mansard; and the latter in the design of these gables and of the rich and effective entrance. The problem, as one of composition, is very much simplified here, since the building is but of six stories, and the dilemma of monotony or miscellany, which so awfully confronts the designers of ten and

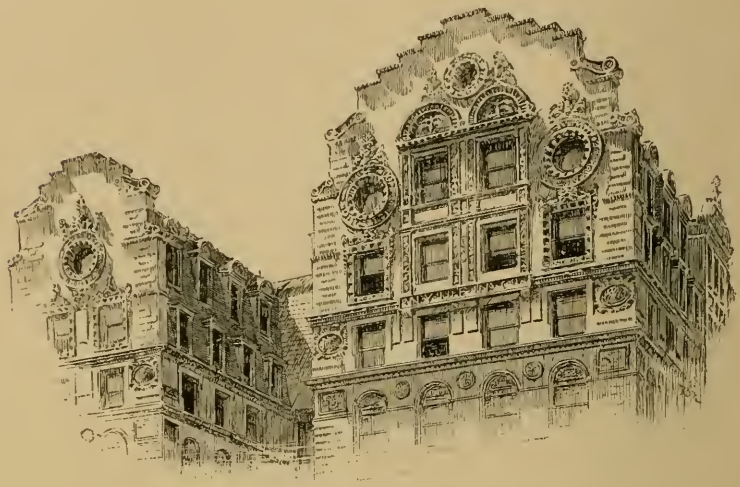


BANK OF MINNESOTA, ST. PAUL.
Wilcox & Johnson, Architects.

twelve story buildings, does not present itself. The two lower stories, though quite differently detailed, are here grouped into an architectural basement, the grouping being emphasized in the main front by the extension of the entrance through both. The superstructure is of three stories, quite identical and very plain in treatment, and above is the lighter and more open fenestration of the gabled attic.

Of far more extent and pretension than this, being

indeed perhaps the costliest and most "important" of all the business block of St. Paul, is the building of the New York Life Insurance Company. In saying that the total impression of this edifice is one of picturesque quaintness, one seems to deny its typicalness, if not its

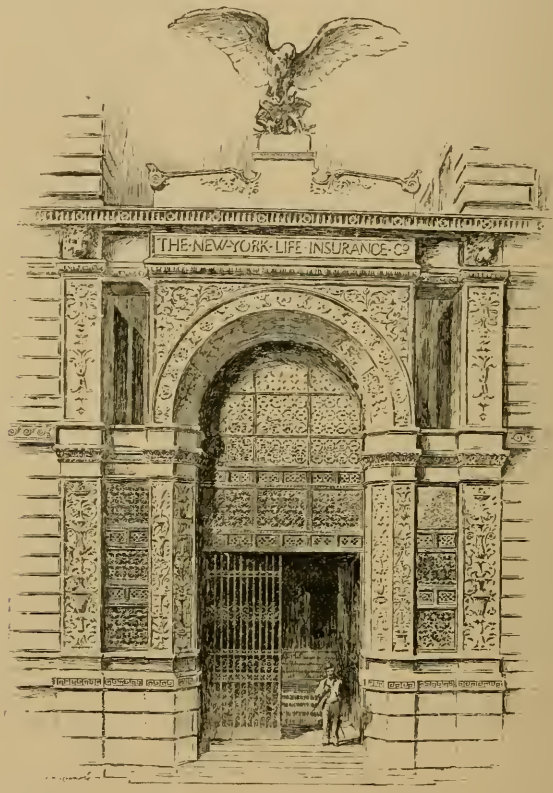


TOP OF NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE BUILDING, ST. PAUL.
Babb, Cook, & Willard, Architects.

appropriateness, as a housing and an expression of the local genius, for assuredly there is nothing quaint about the Western business man or his procedures during business hours, however quaint and even picturesque one may find him when relaxing into anecdote in his hours of ease. The building owes its quaintness in great part to the division of its superstructure into two unequal masses flanking a narrow court, at the base of which is the main entrance. The general arrangement is not uncommon in the business blocks of New York. The unequal division into masses, of which one is just twice as wide as the other, looks capricious in the present detached condition of the building; though when

another lofty building abuts upon it, the inequality will be seen to be a sensible precaution to secure the effective lighting of the narrower mass, the light for the wider being secured by a street upon one side as well as by the court upon the other. Even so, this will not be so intuitively beheld as the fact of the inequality itself, and as the differences of treatment to which it gives rise and by which it is emphasized; for the quaintness resulting from the asymmetry is so far from being ungrateful to the designer that he has seized upon it with avidity, and developed it by all the means in his power. Quaintness is the word that everybody uses spontaneously to express the character of the Dutch and Flemish Renaissance, and the treatment of these unequal gables is obviously derived from Flemish examples. The origin of their crow steps and ailerons is unmistakable, and the treatment of the grouped and somewhat huddled openings, and their wreathed pediments and bull's-eyes, richly and heavily framed in terra-cotta, is equally characteristic, to the point of being baroque. This character is quite evidently meant, and the picturesqueness that results from it is undeniable, and gives the building its prevailing expression; howbeit it is confined to the gables, the treatment of the substructure being as "architecturesque" as that of the superstructure is picturesque. A simple and massive basement of two stories in masonry carries the five stories of brick-work heavily quoined in stone that constitute the body of the building, and this is itself subdivided by slight but sufficient differences, the lower story being altogether of masonry, and the upper arcaded. An intermediate story, emphatically marked off above and below, separates this body from the two-story roof, the gables of which we have been considering. The main entrance, which gives ac-

cess to a stately and sumptuous corridor, seems itself extraneous to the building, having little congruity either with the straightforward and structural treatment of the main building, or with the bulbous picturesqueness of the gables. The care with which its detail is studied



ENTRANCE TO NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE BUILDING, ST. PAUL.

is evident, and also the elegance of the detail in its kind and in its place; but it does not seem to be in its place anywhere out-of-doors, and still less as applied to the entrance of a business block to which it is merely applied, and from which it is not developed. Its extreme delicacy, indeed, almost gives the impression that it is

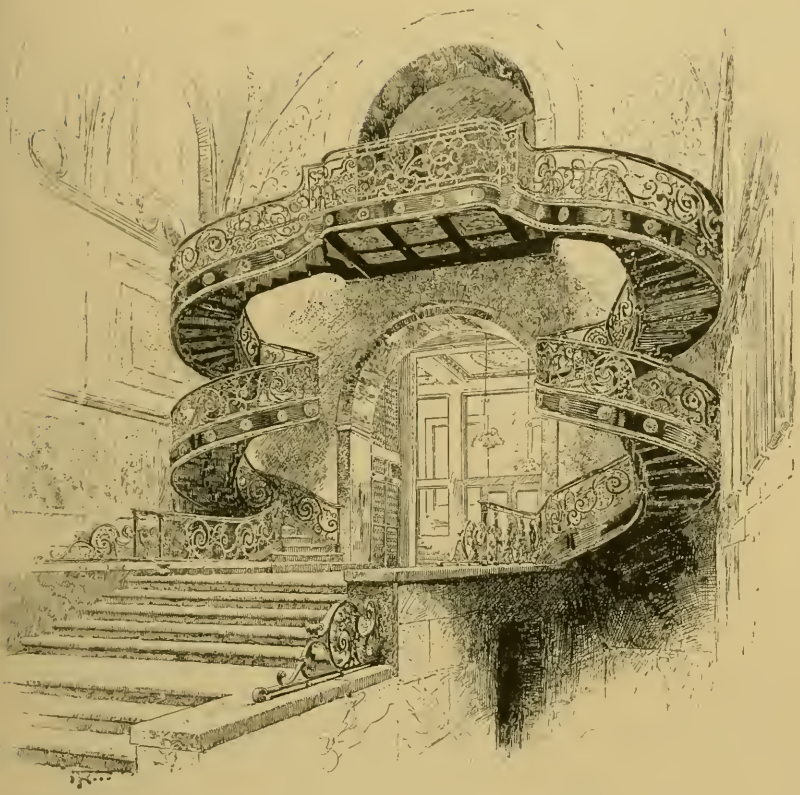
meant to be a still small voice of scholarly protest on the part of an "Eastern" architect against a "boisterous and rough-hewn" Westernness. A still smaller voice of protest seems to be emitted by the design of the Endicott Arcade, the voice of one crying, very softly, in the wilderness. So ostentatiously discreet is the detail of this building, indeed, so minute the scale of it, and so studious the avoidance of anything like stress and the effort for understatement, that the very quietness of its remonstrance gives it the effect of vociferation.

> "He who in quest of quiet 'Silence' hoots,
> Is apt to make the hubbub he imputes."

It seems to be an explicit expostulation, for example, with the architect of the Guaranty Loan Building in Minneapolis, which has many striking details not without ingenuity, and certainly not without "enterprise," but as certainly without the refinement that comes of a studied and affectionate elaboration, insomuch that this also may be admitted to be W——n, and to invite the full force of Dryden's criticism. The building in the exterior of which this mild remonstrance is made has an interior feature that is noteworthy for other qualities than the avoidance of indiscretion and overstatement—the "arcade," so called, from which it takes its name—a broad corridor, sumptuous in material and treatment to the "palatial" point, one's admiration for which is not destroyed, though it is abated, by a consideration of its irrelevancy to a business block. The building of the New York Life in Minneapolis, by the same architects as the building of the same corporation in St. Paul, is more readily recognizable by a New-Yorker as their work. It is a much more commonplace and a much more utilitarian composition—a basement of four stories, of which two are in masonry, carrying a central division also of four and an attic of two, the superstruct-

ure being of brick-work. The two principal divisions are too nearly equal; nor does the change of material effected by building the two upper stories of the basement in brick-work achieve the rhythmic relation for the attainment of which it was doubtless introduced. But the structure is nevertheless a more satisfactory example of commercial architecture than the St. Paul building. Its entrance, of four fluted and banded columns of a very free Roman Doric, with the platform on consoles above, has strength and dignity, and is a feature that can evidently be freely exposed to the weather, and that is not incongruous as the portal of a great commercial building. A very noteworthy feature of the interior is the double spiral staircase in

NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE BUILDING, MINNEAPOLIS.
Babb, Cook, & Willard, Architects.

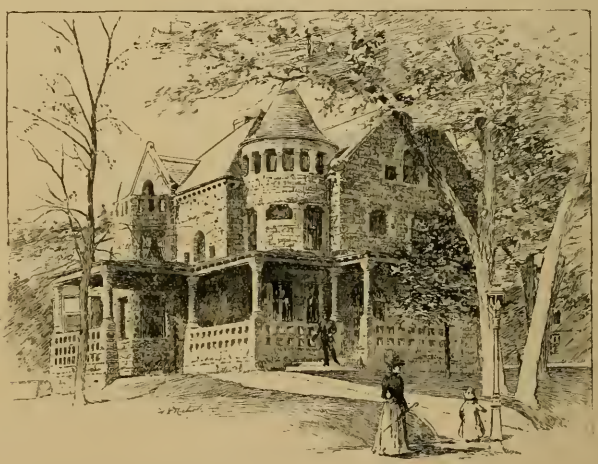


VESTIBULE OF NEW YORK LIFE INSURANCE BUILDING, MINNEAPOLIS.

metal that has apparently been inspired by the famous rood screen of St. Étienne du Mont in Paris, and that is a very taking and successful design, in which the treatment of the material is ingenious and characteristic.

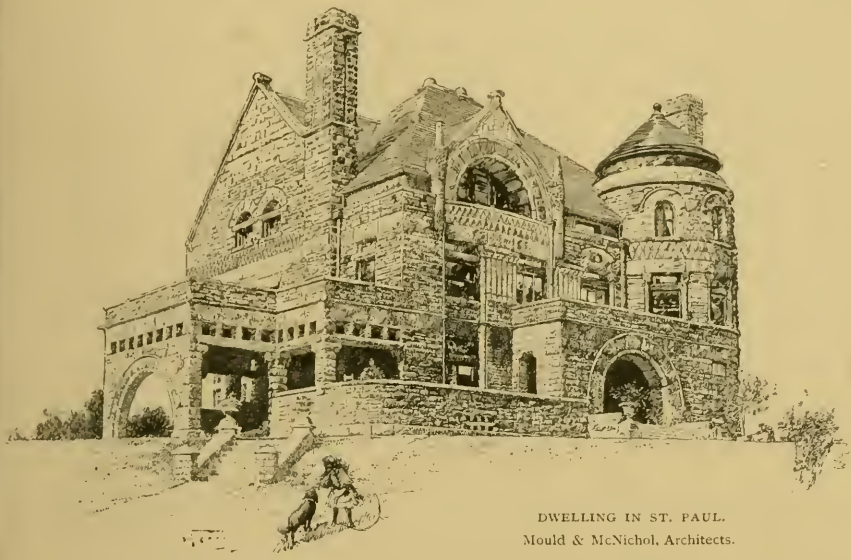
We have seen that the huddled condition of the business quarter of St. Paul, practically a disadvantage in comparison with the spaciousness of Minneapolis, has become architecturally a positive advantage. The natural advantages with respect to the quarters of residence seem to be strongly on the side of St. Paul. The

river-front at Minneapolis is not available for house-building, nor is there any other topographical indication of a fashionable quarter, except what is furnished by the slight undulations of the plateau. The more pretentious houses are for the most part scattered, and, of course, much more isolated than the towering commercial buildings. On the other hand, the fashionable quarter of St. Paul is distinctly marked out by nature. It could not have been established anywhere but at the edge of the bluff overhanging the town and commanding the Mississippi. Surely this height must have been one of those eminences that struck the imagination of Trollope when they were yet unoccupied. And now the "noble residences" have come to crown the hill-side, and really noble residences many of them are.



DWELLING IN MINNEAPOLIS.
Harry W. Jones, Architect.

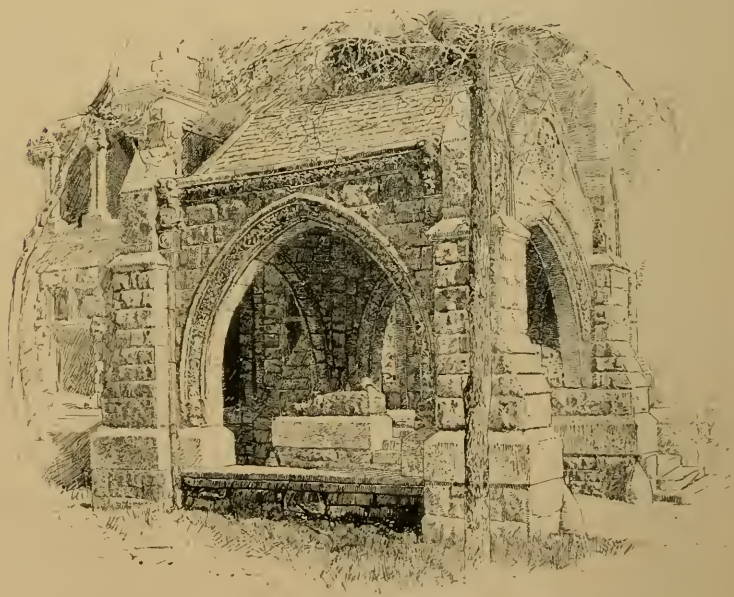
There are perhaps as skilfully designed houses in the younger city, and certainly there are houses as costly; but there is nothing to be compared with the massing of the handsome houses of St. Paul upon the ridge



DWELLING IN ST. PAUL.
Mould & McNichol, Architects.

above the river. Indeed, there are very few streets in the United States that give in as high a degree as Summit Avenue the sense of an expenditure liberal without ostentation, directed by skill, and restrained by taste. What mainly strikes a pilgrim from the East is not so much the merit of the best of these houses, as the fact that there are no bad ones; none, at least, so bad as to disturb the general impression of richness and refinement, and none that make the crude display of "new money" that is to be seen in the fashionable quarters of cities even richer and far older. The houses rise, to borrow one of Ruskin's eloquent phrases, "in fair fulfilment of domestic service and modesty of home seclusion." The air of completeness, of finish, of "keeping," so rare in American towns, is here as marked as at Newport. In the architecture there is a wide variety, which does not, however, suffice to destroy the homogeneousness of the total effect. Suggestions from the Romanesque perhaps prevail, and testify anew to the

influence of Richardson, though there are suggestions from the Renaissance and from pointed architecture that show scholarship as well as invention. The cleverness and ingenuity of a porte-cochère of two pointed arches are not diminished by the likelihood that it was suggested by a canopied tomb in a cathedral. But, indeed, from whatever source the inspiration of the architects may have come, it is everywhere plain that they have had no intention of presenting "examples" of historical architecture, and highly unlikely that they would be disturbed by the detection in their work of solecisms that were such merely from the academic point of view. It is scarcely worth while to go into specific criticism of their domestic work. To illustrate it is to show that the designers of the best of it are quite abreast of the architects of the older parts of the country, and that they



PORTE-COCHÈRE, ST. PAUL.
Wilcox & Johnson, Architects.

PORCH IN ST. PAUL.
Mould & McNichol, Architects.

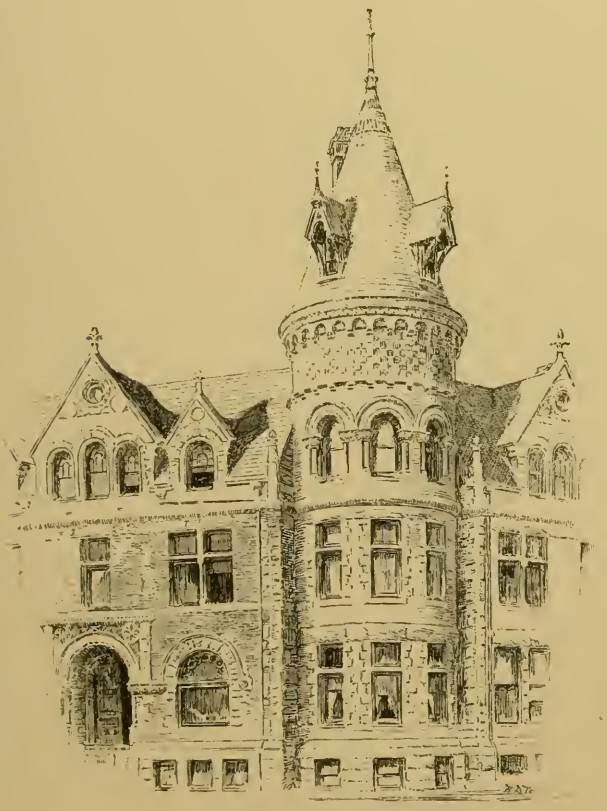
are able to command an equal skill of craftsmanship in the execution of their designs.

This does not answer our question whether there is any such thing as Western architecture, or whether these papers should not rather have been entitled "Glimpses of Architecture in the West." The interest in this art throughout the West is at least as general as the interest in it throughout the East, and it is attested in the twin cities by the existence of a flourishing and enterprising periodical, the "Northwestern Architect," to which I am glad to confess my obligations. It is natural that this interest, when joined to an intense local patriotism, should lead to a magnifying of the Westernness of such structures as are the subjects of local pride. It is common enough to hear the same local patriot who declaims to you in praise of Western architecture explain also

FROM A DWELLING IN ST. PAUL.
Gilbert & Taylor, Architects.

that the specimens of it which he commends to your admiration are the work of architects of "Eastern" birth or training. Now, if not in Dickens's time, the "man of Boston raisin'" is recognized in the West to have his uses. The question whether there is any American architecture is not yet so triumphantly answered that it is other than provincial to lay much stress on local differences. The general impression that the Eastern observer derives from Western architecture is the same that American architecture in general makes upon the European observer; and that is, that it is a very much emancipated architecture. Our architects are assuredly less trammelled by tradition than those of any older countries, and the architects of the West are even less trammelled than those of the East. Their characteristic buildings show this characteristic equally, whether they be good or bad. The towering commercial structures that are forced upon them by new conditions and

facilities are very seldom specimens of any historical style; and the best and the worst of these, the most and the least studied, are apt to be equally hard to classify. To be emancipated is not a merit; and to judge whether or not it is an advantage, one needs to examine the performances in which the emancipation is exhibited. "That a good man be 'free,' as we call it," says Carlyle, in one of his most emphatic Jeremiads—"be permitted to unfold himself in works of goodness and nobleness—is surely a blessing to him, immense and indispensable;



DWELLINGS IN ST. PAUL.
Wilcox & Johnson, Architects.

to him and to those about him. But that a bad man be 'free'—permitted to unfold himself in *his* particular way —is, contrariwise, the fatallest curse you could inflict upon him; curse, and nothing else, to him and all his neighbors."

There is here not a question of morals, but of knowledge and competency. The restraints in architecture of a recognized school, of a prevailing style, are useful and salutary in proportion to the absence of restraint that the architect is capable of imposing upon himself. The secular tradition of French architecture, imposed by public authority and inculcated by official academics, is felt as a trammel by many architects, who, nevertheless, have every reason to feel grateful for the power of design which this same official curriculum has trained and developed. In England the fear of the archæologists and of the ecclesiologists operated, during the period of modern Gothic at least, with equal force, though without any official sanction. To be "ungrammatical," not to adopt a particular phase of historical architecture, and not to confine one's self to it in a design, was there the unforgivable offence, even though the incongruities that resulted from transcending it were imperceptible to an artist and obvious only to an archæologist. A designer thoroughly trained under either of these systems, and then transferred to this country as a practitioner, must feel, as many such a practitioner has in fact felt, that he was suddenly unshackled, and that his emancipation was an unmixed advantage to him; but it is none the less true that his power to use his liberty wisely came from the discipline that was now relaxed. The academic prolusions of the Beaux Arts, or the exercises of a draughtsman, have served their purpose in qualifying him for independent design. The advocates of the curriculum of the English public schools maintain that, ob-

PORCH IN ST. PAUL.
A. H. Stem, Architect.

solete as it seems, even the practice of making Latin verses has its great benefits in imparting to the pupil the command of literary form and of beauty of diction. There are many examples to sustain this contention, as well as the analogous contention that a faithful study and reproduction of antique or of mediæval architecture are highly useful, if not altogether indispensable, to cultivate an architect's power of design. Only it may be

pointed out that the use of these studies is to enable the student to express himself with more power and grace in the vernacular, and that one no longer reverts to Latin verse when he has really something to say. The monuments that are accepted as models by the modern world are themselves the results of the labors of successive generations. It was by a secular process that the same structural elements employed at Thebes and Karnac were developed to the perfection of the Parthenon. In proportion to the newness of their problems it is to be expected that the efforts of our architects will be crude; but there is a vast difference between the crudity of a serious and matured attempt to do a new thing and the crudity of mere ignorance and self-sufficiency. Evidently the progress of American architecture will not be promoted by the labors of designers, whether they be "Western" or "Eastern," who have merely "lived in the alms basket" of architectural forms, and whose notion of architecture consists in multiplying "features," as who should think to enhance the expressiveness of the human countenance by adorning it with two noses.

One cannot neologize with any promise of success unless he knows what is already in the dictionary; and a professional equipment that puts its owner really in possession of the best that has been done in the world is indispensable to successful eclecticism in architecture. On the other hand, it is equally true that no progress can result from the labors of architects whose training has made them so fastidious that they are more revolted by the crudity of the forms that result from the attempt to express a new meaning than by the failure to make the attempt, and so conceal what they are really doing behind a mask of historical architecture, of which the elegance is quite irrelevant. This latter fault is that of modern architecture in general. The history of that

architecture indicates that it is a fault even more unpromising of progress than the crudities of an emancipated architecture, in which the discipline of the designer fails to supply the place of the artificial check of an historical style. It is more feasible to tame exuberances than to create a soul under the ribs of death. The emancipation of American architecture is thus ultimately more hopeful than if it were put under academic bonds to keep the peace. It may freely be admitted that many of its manifestations are not for the present joyous, but grievous, and that to throw upon the individual designer the responsibility withheld from a designer with whom fidelity to style is the first duty is a process that fails when his work, as has been wittily said, ' shows no more self-restraint than a bunch of fire-crackers." But these papers have also borne witness that there are among the emancipated practitioners of architecture in the West men who have shown that they can use their liberty wisely, and whose work can be hailed as among the hopeful beginnings of a national architecture.

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